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HOPE GROWS

For Nevada

TRANSHEALTH

Office of Public Health Informatics and Epidemiology
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE	1
INTRODUCTION	3
METHODS	4
SUMMARY	3-4
DEMOGRAPHICS	5-10
FIGURE 1: County lived or worked in Nevada (past 6 months).....	6
FIGURE 2: Current age	6
FIGURE 3: Primary race/ethnicity	7
FIGURE 4: Highest level of school or degree.....	7
FIGURE 5: Main source of income	8
FIGURE 6: Average annual income	8
FIGURE 7: Living arrangements (past 6 months).....	9
FIGURE 8: Been in jail/prison (ever)	9
FIGURE 9: Current relationship status	10
FIGURE 10: Have children	10
GENDER IDENTITY	11-13
FIGURE 11: Sex written on original birth certificate	12
FIGURE 12: Primary gender identity today	12
FIGURE 13: Have or would like to change gender marker on identification documents	13
FIGURE 14: How many of the following people know you are transgender or gender non-conforming.....	13
HEALTH CARE SERVICES	14-20
FIGURE 15: Type of health insurance.....	15
FIGURE 16: Where did you go for medical care (past 12 months).....	15
FIGURE 17: Frequency of gender disclosure to health care provider (past 12 months)	16
FIGURE 18: Experience with healthcare providers (past 12 months)	17
FIGURE 19: Have had or would like to have following gender confirmation services	18
FIGURE 20: Used hormones for transitioning or cosmetic reasons (past 12 months)	18
FIGURE 21: Where did you get hormones (past 6 months)	19
FIGURE 22: Injected hormones for purpose of transitioning or cosmetic reasons (past 6 months).....	19
FIGURE 23: Shared needles when injecting hormones (past 6 months)	20
FIGURE 24: Where did you get needles for hormone injections (past 6 months)	20
VICTIMIZATION AND DISCRIMINATION	21-24
FIGURE 25: Been hit, kicked, punched, or physically hurt by someone on purpose (ever).....	22
FIGURE 26: Been forced or pressured to have sex when you did not want to (ever)	22
FIGURE 27: Had any of the following problems and thought it was because of your gender identity or expression	23
FIGURE 28: Are you aware that there is a law in Nevada that prohibits the act of discrimination against someone based on their “gender identity or expression” in employment, housing, and public accommodations	24

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SEXUAL BEHAVIORS, HIV, STDS	25-30
FIGURE 29: Sexual orientation	26
FIGURE 30: Had vaginal, anal, or oral sex with another person (past 6 months)	26
FIGURE 31: Type of partners with whom you had vaginal, anal, or oral sex (past 6 months)	27
FIGURE 32: Did not use a condom during vaginal or anal sex by partner type (past 6 months).....	27
FIGURE 33: How often were you drunk, high or under the influence of alcohol or drugs when you engaged in any sexual activity	28
FIGURE 34: When you engaged in any sexual activities, to your knowledge were any partners HIV positive (past 6 months)	28
FIGURE 35: Last HIV test	29
FIGURE 36: Last Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) test.....	29
FIGURE 37: Where do you usually get condoms (past 6 months)	30
FIGURE 38: Is there a place to get HIV/STI information/services that are sensitive to the needs of transgender people	30
SUBSTANCE USE	31-35
FIGURE 39: Drank alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine, or liquor (past 6 months and past 30 days)	32
FIGURE 40: Binge drinking (past 30 days).....	32
FIGURE 41: Substance use (ever and past 6 months)	33
FIGURE 42: Been to an alcohol or drug treatment program (ever)	34
FIGURE 43: Type of alcohol or drug treatment program	34
FIGURE 44: Is there a place to get substance abuse information/services that are sensitive to the needs of transgender people	35
MENTAL HEALTH	36-43
FIGURE 45: Indicate how you feel about the following statements (social support scale)	37
FIGURE 46: Met the clinical cut-off for psychological distress (psychological distress scale BSI-18).....	38
FIGURE 47: Seriously considered attempting suicide (ever).....	38
FIGURE 48: Seriously considered attempting suicide (past 6 months).....	39
FIGURE 49: Made a plan to attempt suicide (ever)	39
FIGURE 50: Made a plan to attempt suicide (past 6 months)	40
FIGURE 51: Attempted suicide with intent to die (ever)	40
FIGURE 52: Attempted suicide with intent to die (past 6 months).....	41
FIGURE 53: Saw a psychiatrist, psychologist, or therapist for an emotional health issue (past 12 months)	41
FIGURE 54: Was prescribed medication for an emotional health issue (past 12 months)	42
FIGURE 55: Attend meetings or support groups for transgender or gender non-conforming people	42
FIGURE 56: Would like to attend meetings or support groups for transgender or gender non-conforming people	43
FIGURE 57: Is there a place to get mental health information/services that are sensitive to the needs of transgender people	43
TOP SERVICE NEEDS	44-45
FIGURE 58: Priority service needs for transgender community in Nevada (indicate top three)	45

PURPOSE

The 2012 *Hope Grows for Nevada Trans Health* study is the first statewide study to describe the health and social service needs of adults in Nevada who self-identify as transgender or gender non-conforming. This study was a collaborative effort between community members and organizations, the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health, and the University of Nevada, Reno, School of Community Health Sciences. It is our intention and hope that the study's findings will be used by health and social service professionals, policy makers, and community members to develop programs and policies that will advance and enhance the health and well-being of transgender persons in Nevada.

INTRODUCTION

What do we mean when we say “transgender”?

The term “transgender” is a broad term used to describe people whose gender identity (internal sense of being a man, woman, neither, both, or other) does not align with the sex that was written on their original birth certificate.

Gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation are not synonymous. *Gender identity* refers to a person's internal sense of being male, female, both, or other. *Gender expression* relates to how a person communicates their gender identity to others through clothing, hairstyles, mannerisms, etc. *Sexual orientation* describes to whom a person is romantically attracted and love. Confusion of these terms may stem from the frequently-used acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT). However, the “T” in LGBT represents a community with unique public health concerns that are only now being understood and addressed.

Development of the *Hope Grows for Transgender Health* study

In 2011, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) published a report entitled *The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding*. In this report, the IOM concluded that it is very difficult to understand the specific health needs of the transgender population because there is a severe lack of data pertaining to the health of transgender people. The IOM identified many barriers to obtaining data such as: 1) the reluctance of individuals to identify as members of a gender minority group, 2) an inability to operationally qualify who is and is not transgender, and 3) the relatively small size of this hidden population. In order to begin addressing these barriers, one recommendation of the IOM is to make the establishment of trust between researcher and participant a priority and to develop studies that can document the health needs of transgender populations¹.

In 2012, representatives from the transgender community in Nevada, community based agencies, local and state health departments, the University of Nevada, Reno, and the University of San Francisco, Center of Excellence for Transgender Health formed a statewide coalition with the immediate purpose of developing a community needs assessment. Using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach², the coalition met bi-weekly to determine research topic areas, survey format, recruitment methods, recruitment materials, and the study name. A smaller group of transgender community members; University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) researchers; and the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) staff met on a weekly basis to develop materials to share with the statewide coalition and local agencies. In addition, four part-time research

associates from the transgender community were hired to conduct the study -- two in northern Nevada and two in southern Nevada. Critical collaborators in the study were newly formed transgender advocacy groups: Advocates for Transgender Health (ATH), a program of Gender Justice Nevada in the Las Vegas area, and the Transgender Allies Group (TAG) in the Reno/Carson City/Lake Tahoe area. Members of these groups were involved in all phases of the study and encouraged a diverse constituency of the transgender community to participate in the study planning process.

METHODS

Participants and Recruitment

From February through October 2013, 205 transgender individuals completed the confidential online survey. Study recruitment was conducted both in-person and online by Research Associates, and by an established network of community-based agencies, lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-questioning (LGBTQ) groups, mental health providers, and medical providers. The *Hope Grows for Nevada Trans Health* study flyer was the primary medium for recruitment and was developed by the coalition. This flyer contained general information about the study, the benefits and risks of participation, a link to the study website, and a direct link and quick response (QR) code to the online survey. For recruitment, flyers were placed at provider offices and agencies, and research associates handed out flyers at various community events and night clubs. For online recruitment, an image of the flyer and/or a link to the study website was posted on agency websites, Facebook pages, and Twitter accounts. Research Associates coordinated posting the study flyer with agencies and providers. They instructed staff to have flyers available for potential participants, and to not coerce or “out” potential participants. For those without internet access, Research Associates provided computers with a Wi-Fi connection in private areas at events so that these people could take the survey. Research Associates also referred interested participants to the location of public computers where they could access the internet and take the survey. A resource guide of transgender-specific resources was available online through the study and local agency websites. Research Associates also carried copies of the resource guide to hand out at events. The most common ways that participants reported hearing about the study were from Facebook (27.3%), a friend (26.8%), a community-based organization (15.6%), the Hope Grows website (8.8%), someone distributing a flyer (8.3%), and Craigslist (7.8%).

Survey Measures

The topics and questions in the survey were developed with ongoing input from the transgender community. When possible, measures that have been empirically tested with this population were used; however, few measures specific to the transgender community exist. Many questions from other transgender needs assessments were used and other questions were adapted for the transgender community. Topic areas included demographics, gender identity, health care services, victimization and discrimination, sexual behaviors, substance use, mental health, and top service needs.

The coalition decided to conduct an online survey for several reasons. With an online survey, a broader audience could be reached, including individuals who live in Nevada’s rural areas, as well as individuals who were not active in the transgender community and would not hear about the survey through friends or providers. There were also concerns about maintaining confidentiality with an interview or questionnaire.

The first page of the online survey stated that participation was completely voluntary and contained information on the benefits and potential risks of participation. Participants had

to acknowledge that they read this and agreed to participate in order to take the online survey. The next page of the survey determined eligibility. Individuals were eligible to participate if they: 1) self-identified as transgender or gender non-conforming; 2) lived or worked in Nevada in the past 6 months; and 3) were 18 years of age or older.

This study received approval from the University of Nevada, Reno Social Behavioral Institutional Review Board (FWA00002306) and the University Medical Center (UMC) Institutional Review Board (FMW00002738).

SUMMARY

Gender identity

- 60% reported male on original birth certificate and 40% reported female.
- 57% identified as transgender, 14% genderqueer, and 13% as opposite sex than written on their original birth certificate.
- Participants indicated that they have changed their gender marker on their birth certificates (29%), social security cards (14%), and driver's licenses (6%); however, over two-thirds would like to change their gender marker on these records in the future.
- 21% had not disclosed their gender identity to immediate family, 26% to work colleagues, and 24% to a healthcare provider.

Health care services

- 34% of participants indicated that they do not have health insurance.
- 80% of participants received medical care in the past 12 months. Of this group,
- 42% felt that the health care providers were competent on transgender issues, and
- 44% felt that their needs as transgendered individuals were met by healthcare providers.
- 53% of participants have had received hormone therapy, 15% chest/top surgery, and 9% genital/bottom surgery; however, well over half would like to pursue these services if insurance covered them.

Victimization and discrimination

- 67% of participants reported being physically hurt by someone on purpose, and
- 32% reported being pressured to have sex against their will.
- Participants frequently reported discrimination and victimization, such as verbal abuse (66%), physical abuse (37%), problems getting a job (50%), losing a job (27%), problems getting mental health services (22%), and problems with the police or the justice system (18%) that they felt was due to their gender identity or expression.
- 22% of participants reported that they were aware of the law in Nevada that prohibits discrimination against someone because of their "gender identity or expression."⁵

Sexual Behaviors

- Sexual orientation is different from gender identity, and participants reported a wide range of sexual identities including gay/lesbian (25%) heterosexual (23%), bisexual (17%), pansexual (13%), queer (11%), questioning (8%), and asexual (4%).
- 62% of participants had sex in the past 12 months.
- 49% had sex with main partners, and of this group, 47% did not use condoms with this type of partner(s) in the past 6 months.
- 28% had sex with casual partner(s), and of this group 38% did not use condom with this type of partner in the past 6 months.

- 7% had sex with partner(s) in exchange for money, drugs, or other things they need. Of this group, 47% did not use condoms with this type of partner in the past 6 months.
- 37% of participants reported never having an HIV test, and 24% reported their last HIV test was more than 24 months ago.
- 39% of participants reported never having an STI test, and 18% reported their last STI test was more than 24 months ago.

Substance Use

- 40% reported tobacco use in the past 6 months.
- 73% of the participants reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days.
- 32% of the participants reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.
- The most frequently used illicit drugs were marijuana (54%), hallucinogenic drugs (23%), non-medical prescription drugs (22%), ecstasy (20%), cocaine (18%), and methamphetamine (14%).

Mental Health

- 36% met the clinical cut-off for significant psychological distress which includes: depression, anxiety, and somatization.
- 67% seriously considered attempting suicide, and 38% attempted suicide with intent to die in their lifetime.
- Almost one-third (29%) of participants attend support meetings and among those who do not, over half (54%) reported that they would like to attend a support group for transgender people.
- 36% felt there was a place to get mental health information and/or services that is sensitive to the needs of transgender people.
- Over two-thirds of participants reported receiving support from family members.

Top Priority Service Needs

- Participants reported that the top services needed for the transgender community in Nevada are: transition related health insurance (70%), healthcare (62%), mental health services (39%), legal services (37%), and employment services (36%).

DEMOGRAPHICS

FIGURE 1: County Lived or Worked in Nevada (past 6 months)

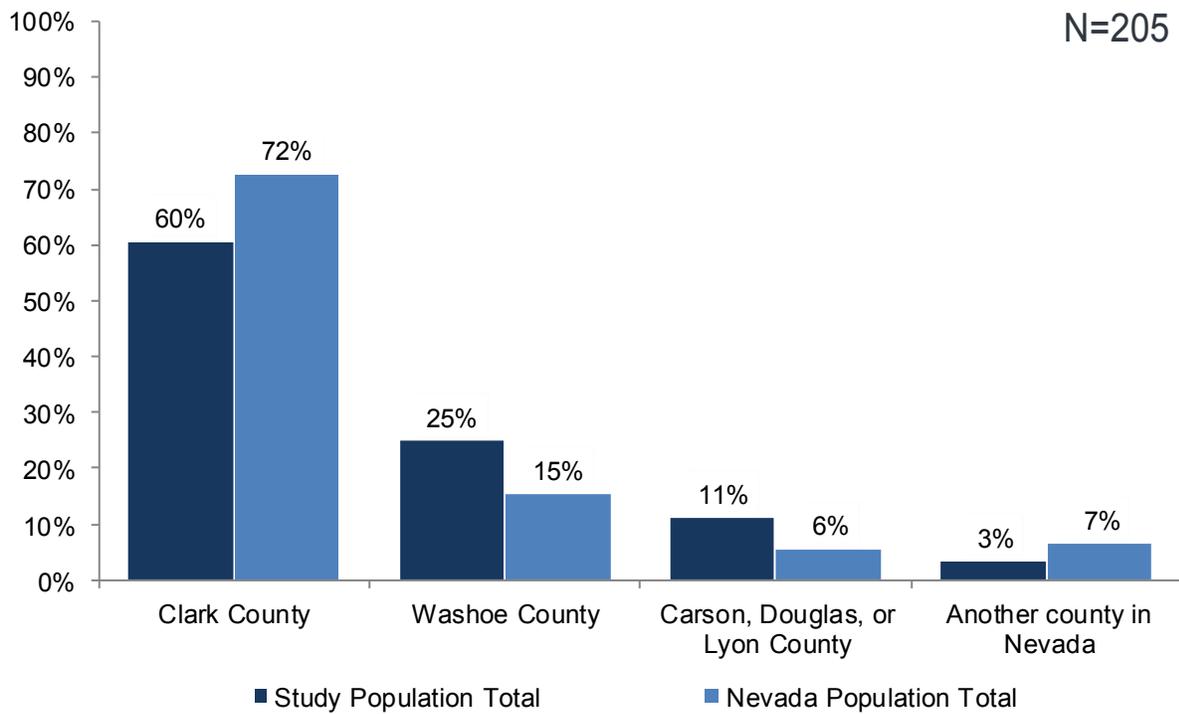


FIGURE 2: Current Age

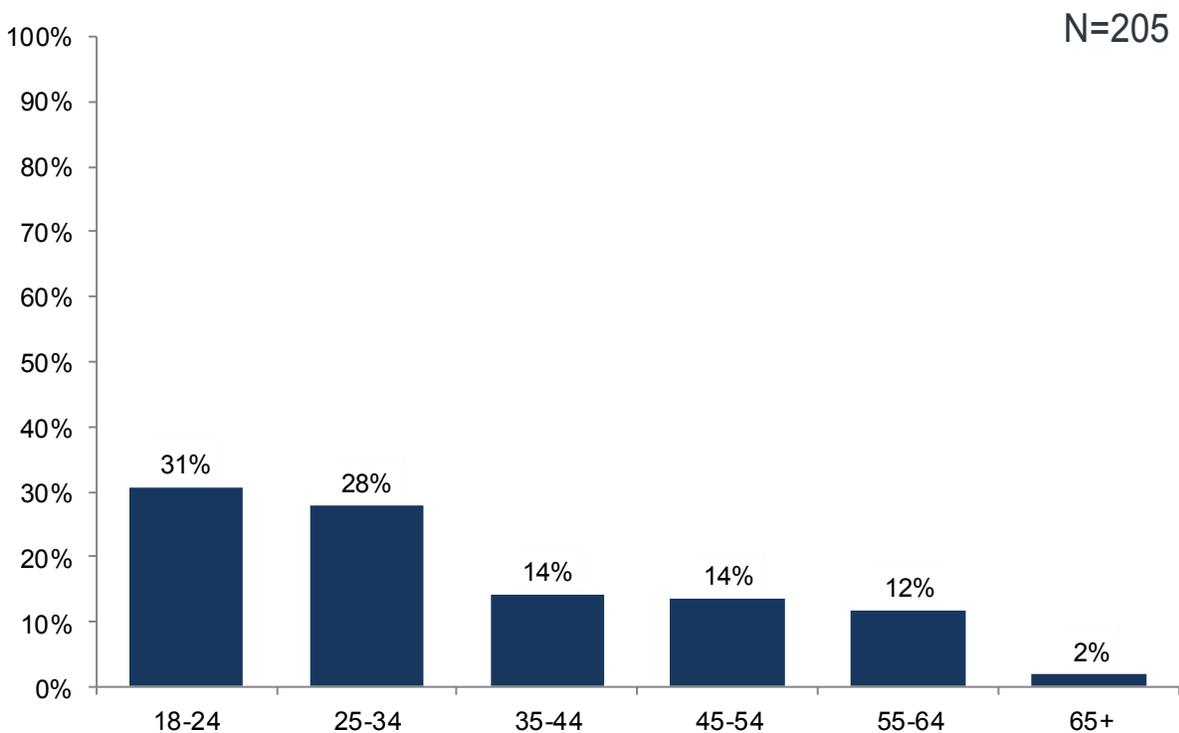
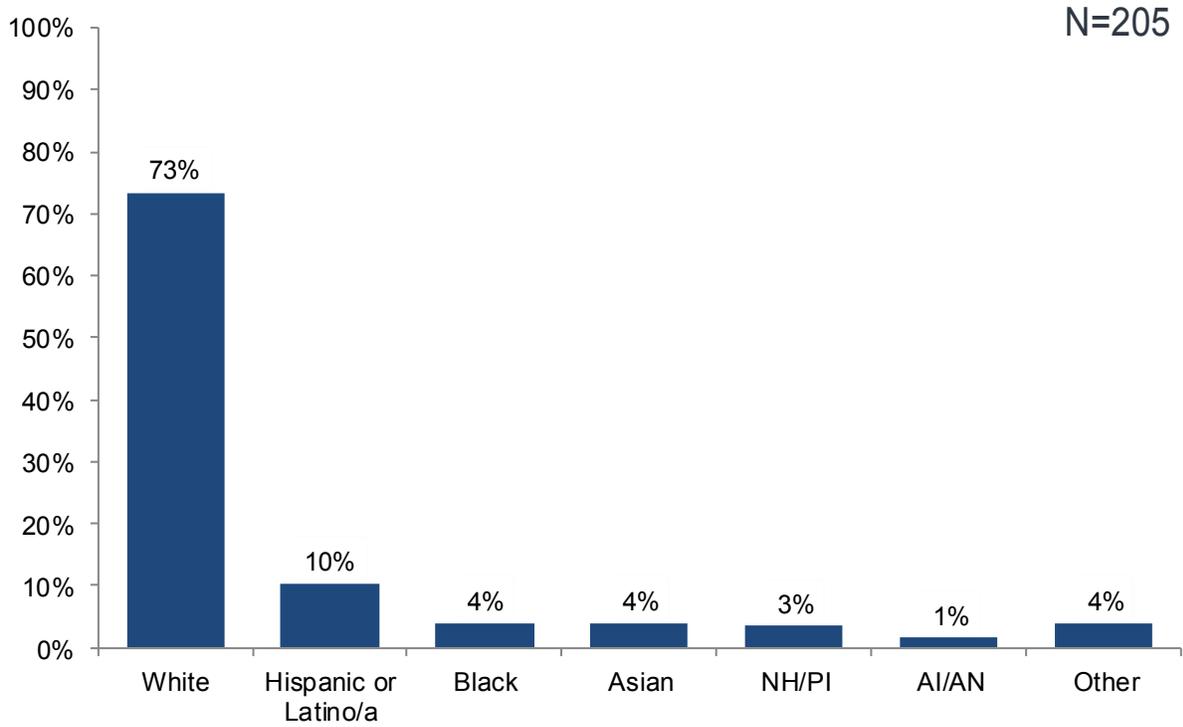


FIGURE 3: Primary Race/Ethnicity



*NH/PI– Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander; AI/AN– American Indian and Alaskan Native

FIGURE 4: Highest level of School or Degree

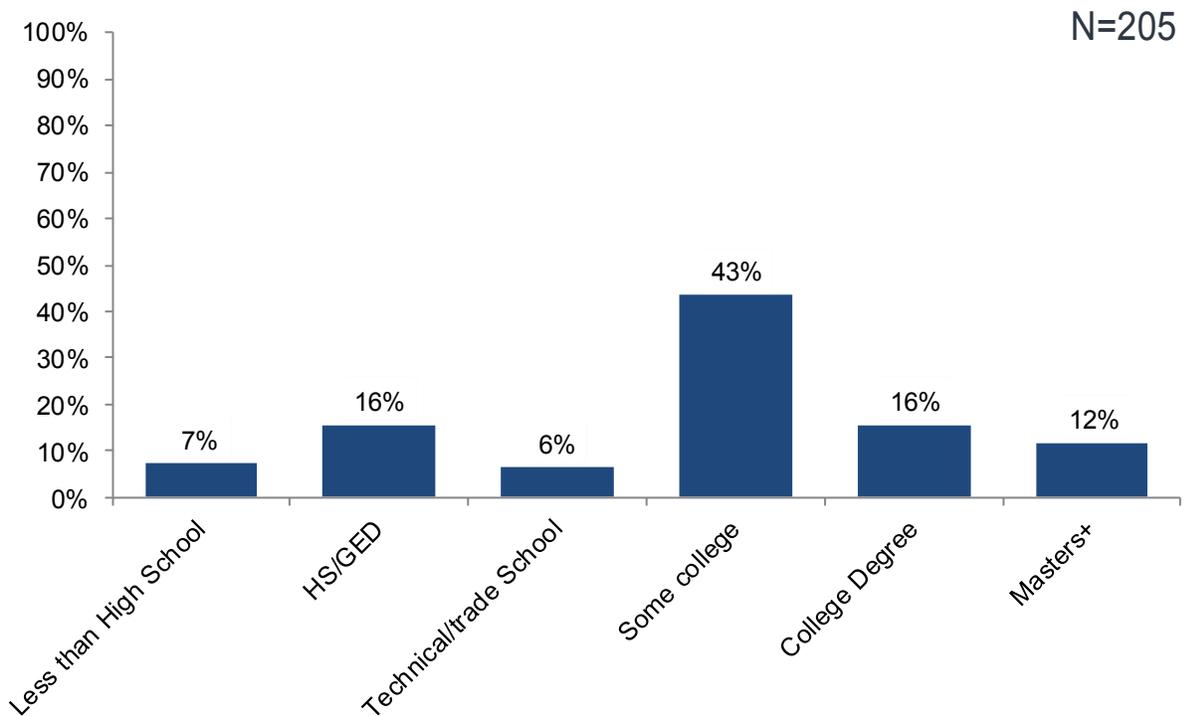
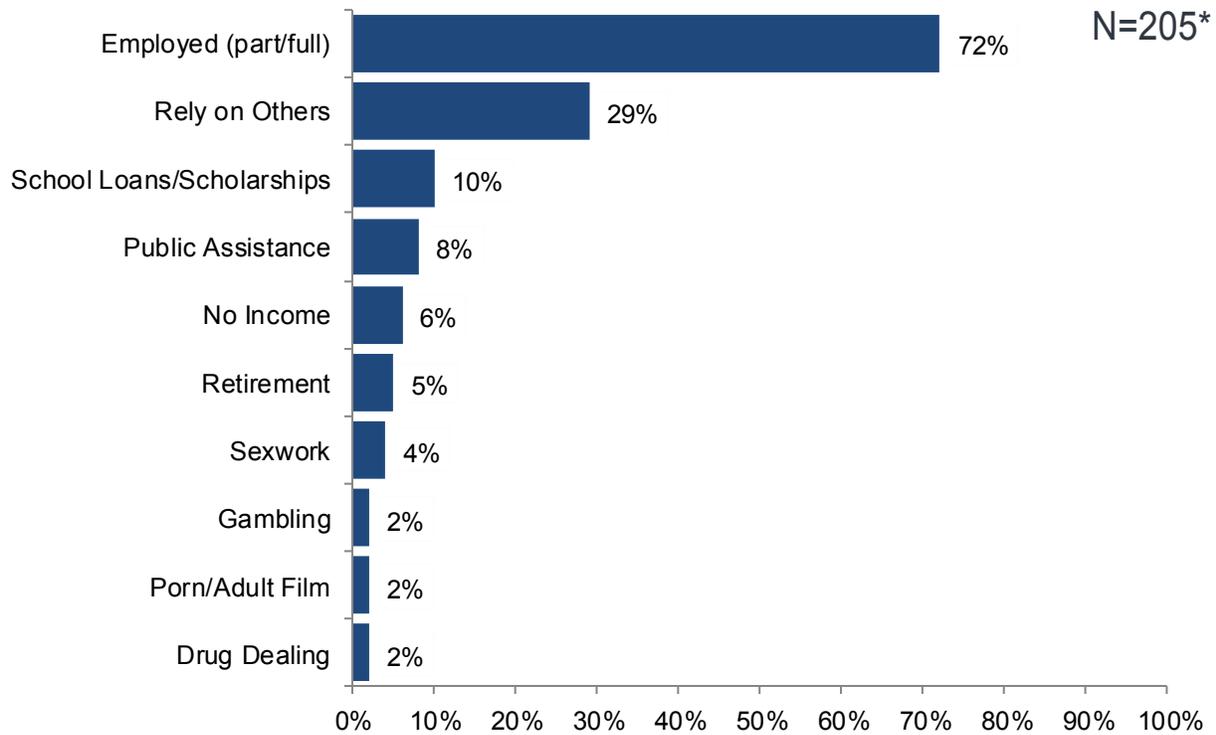
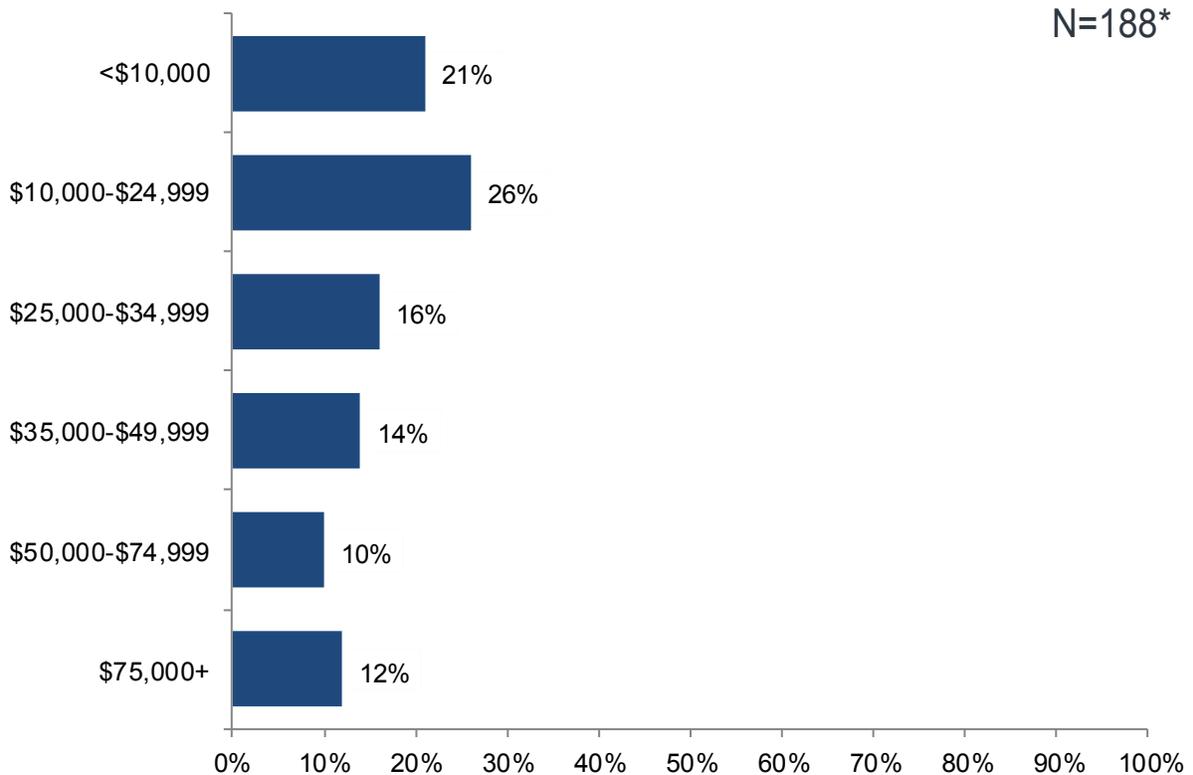


FIGURE 5: Main Source of Income



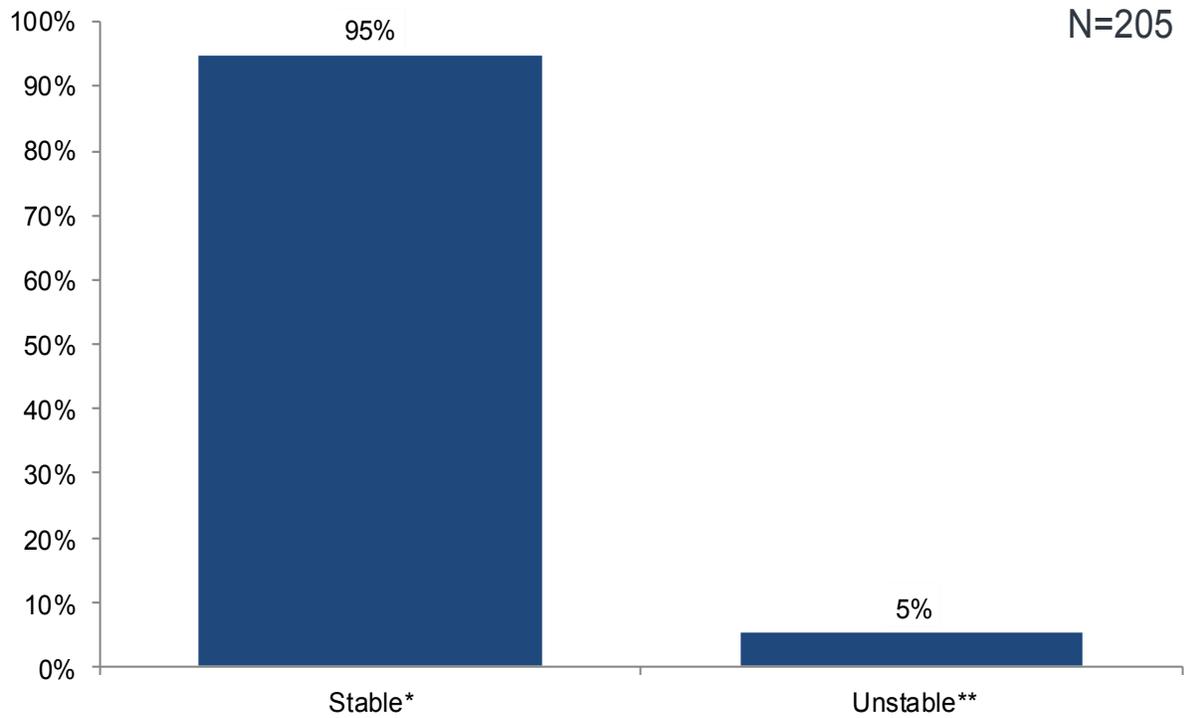
*Multiple answers are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

FIGURE 6: Average Annual Income



*17 Missing

FIGURE 7: Living Arrangements (past 6 months)



Stable* includes owned/rented house, mobile home or apartment; family/partner/friend's house, mobile home or apartment where they pay rent. *Unstable* includes weekly/daily motel, halfway house/drug treatment, homeless shelter, domestic violence shelter or "safe house", streets/car/abandoned house, hospital, jail/prison.

FIGURE 8: Been in Jail/Prison (ever)

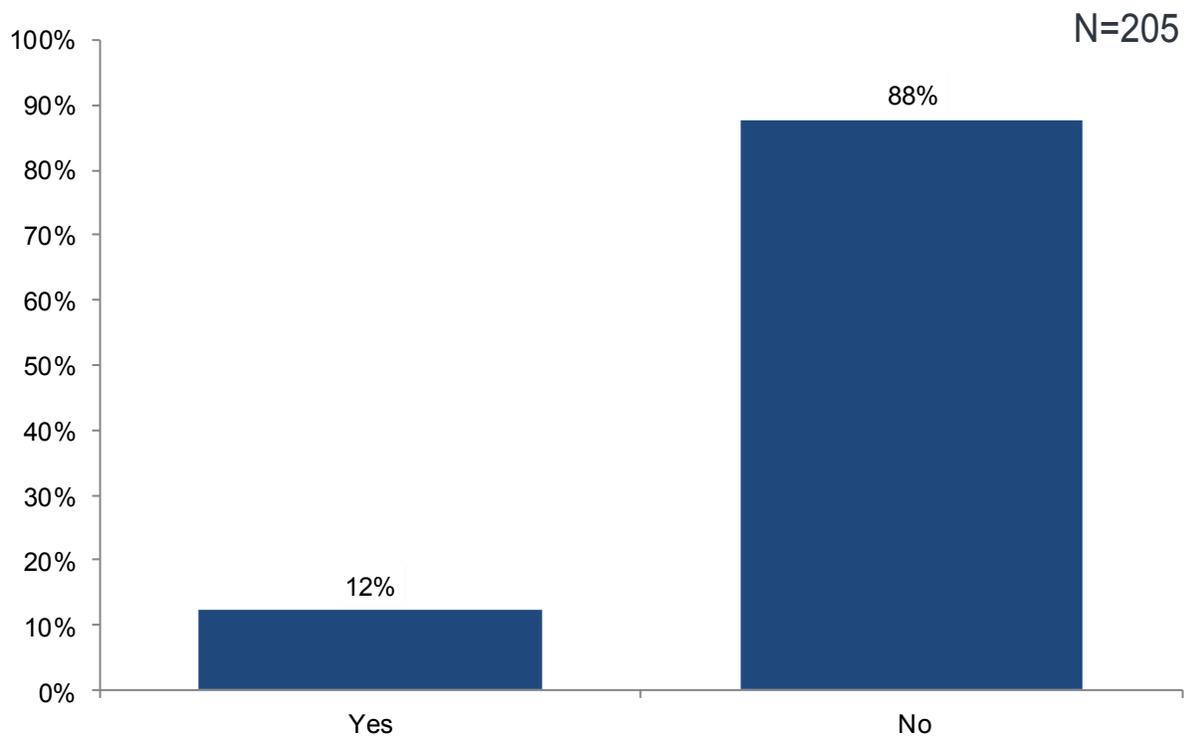


FIGURE 9: Current Relationship Status

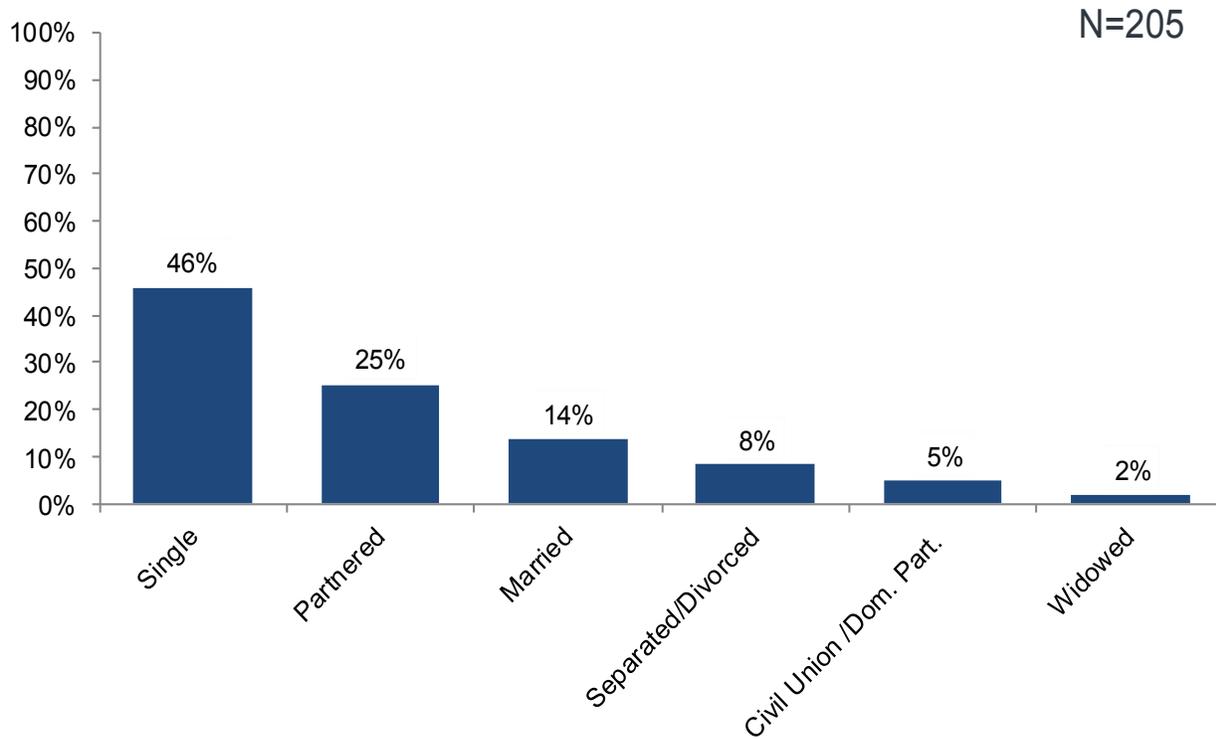
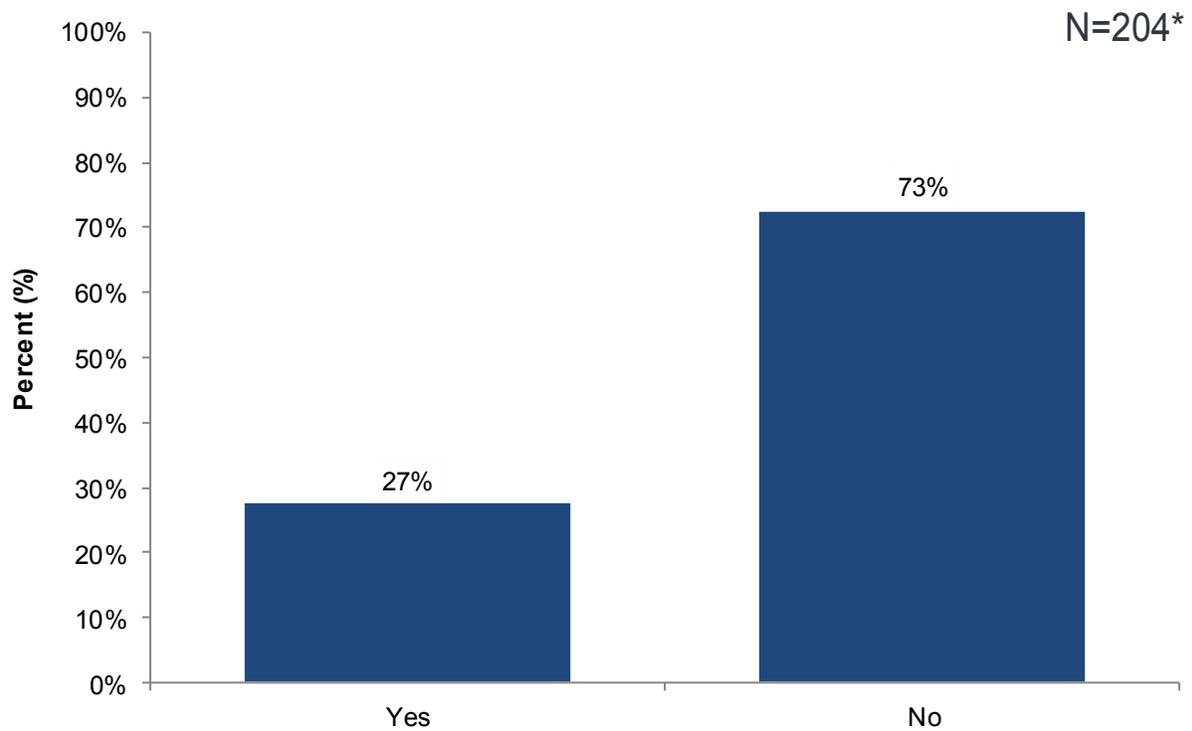


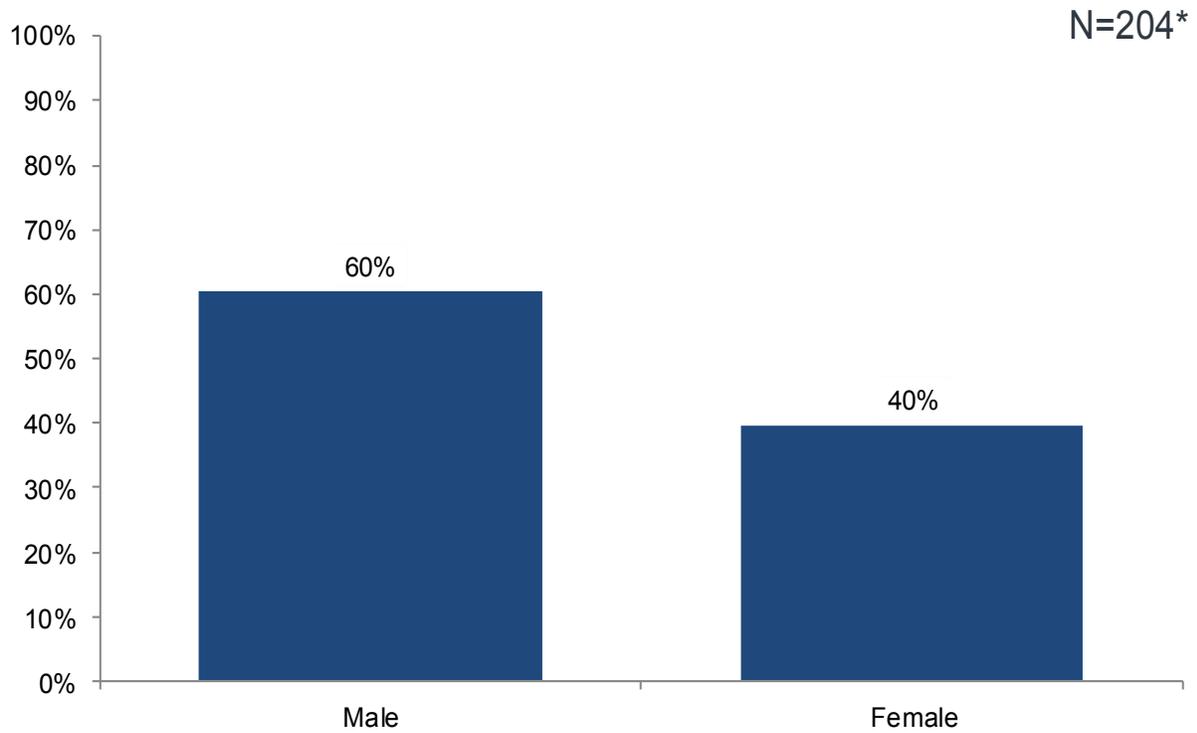
FIGURE 10: Have Children



*1 Missing

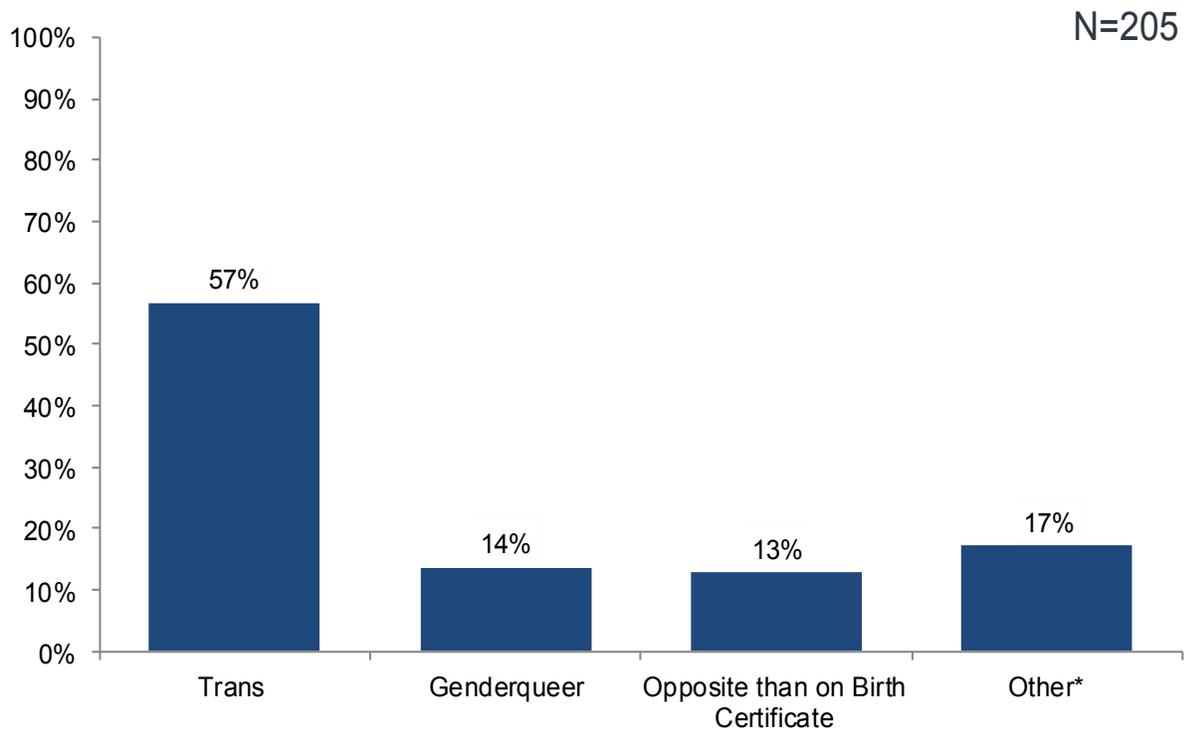
GENDER IDENTITY

FIGURE 11: Sex Written on Original Birth Certificate



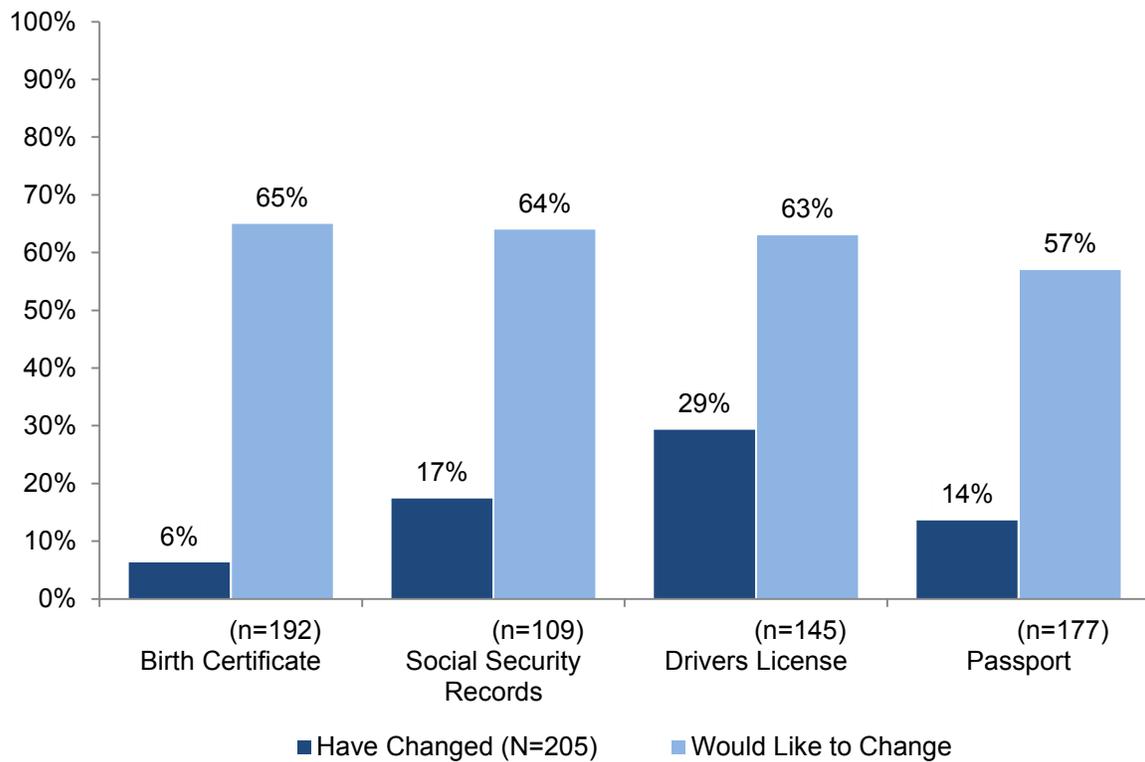
*1 Missing

FIGURE 12: Primary Gender Identity Today



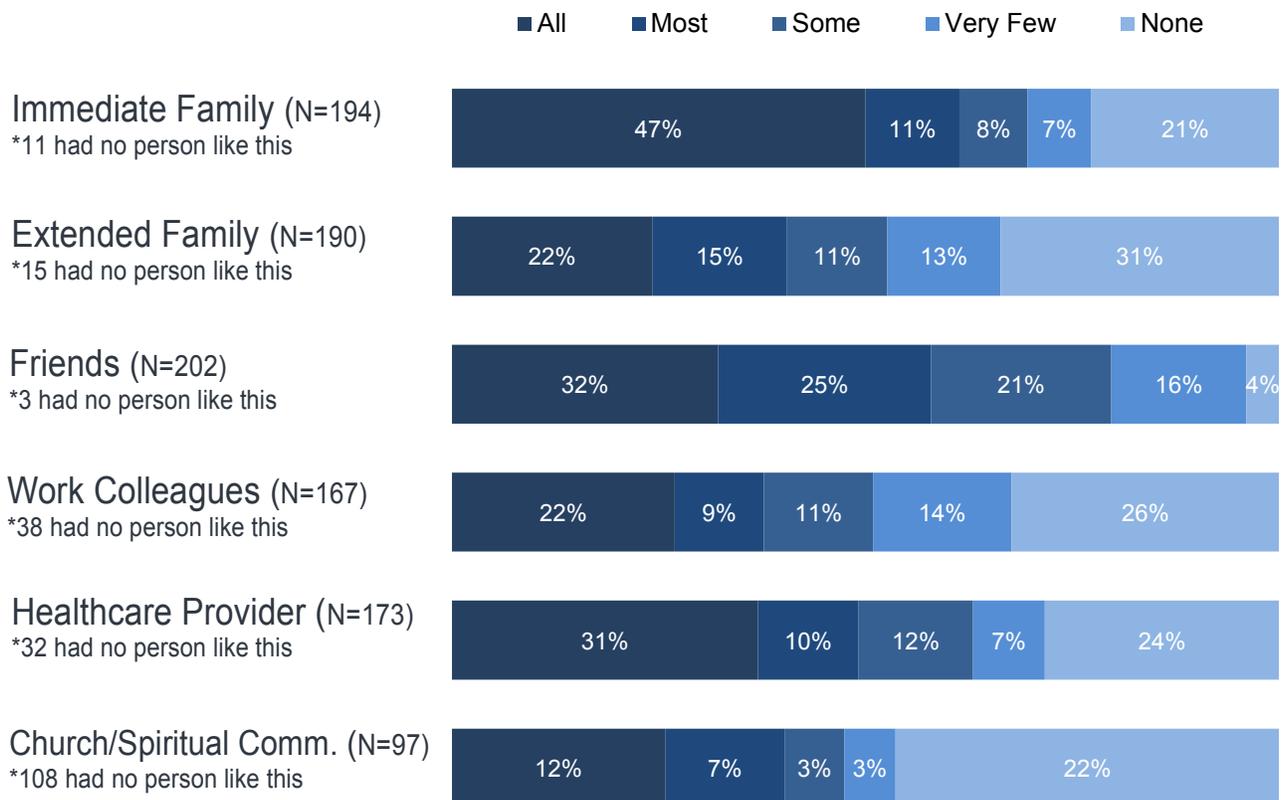
*Other category included femme queen, butch queen, drag queen, drag king, crossdresser, two spirit, androgenous, intersex.

FIGURE 13: Have or Would Like to Change Gender Marker on Identification Documents



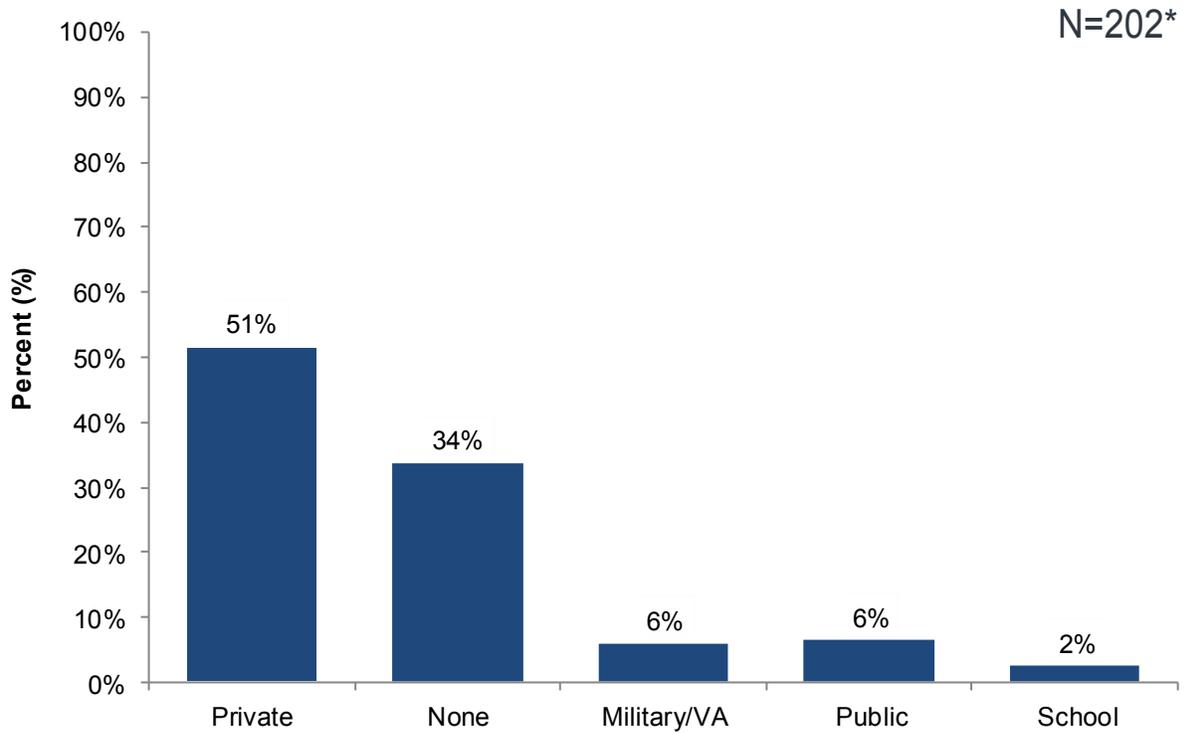
*Only among those who reported they have not changed; multiple questions are represented in figure and

FIGURE 14: How Many of the Following People Know You are Transgender or Gender Non-Conforming



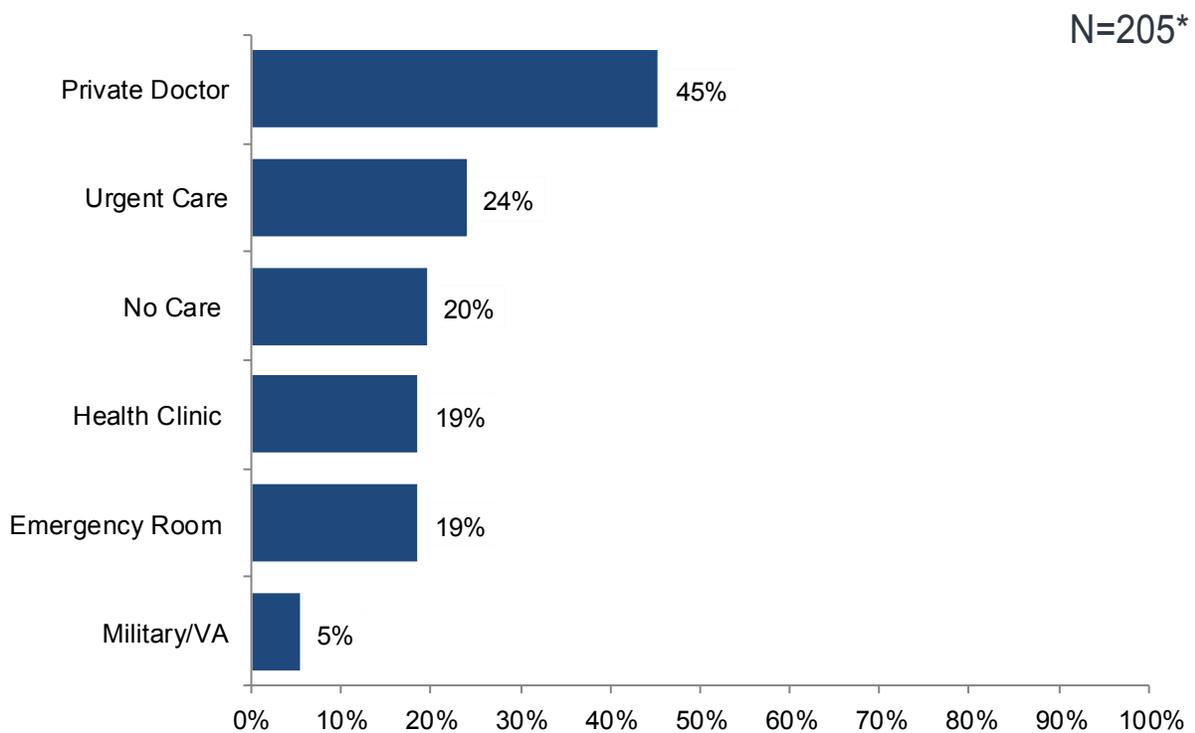
HEALTH CARE SERVICES

FIGURE 15: Type of Health Insurance



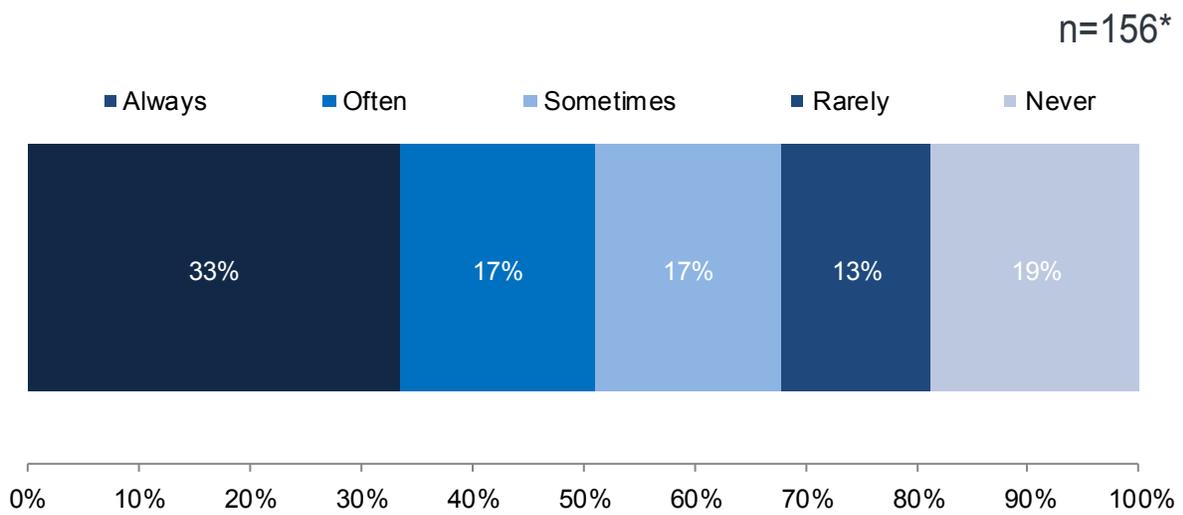
*3 Missing

FIGURE 16: Where Did You Go for Medical Care (past 12 months)



*Multiple answers are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

FIGURE 17: Frequency of Gender Identity Disclosure to Health Care Provider (past 12 months)



*40 did not receive health care in the past 12 months

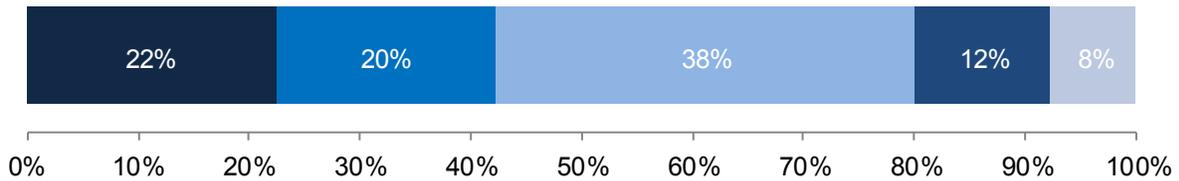
FIGURE 18: Experience with Healthcare Providers

(past 12 months)

N=156*

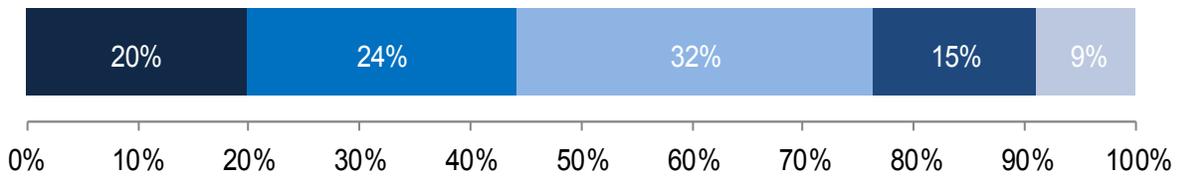
My healthcare provider(s) were competent regarding transgender issues

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neither Disagree or Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



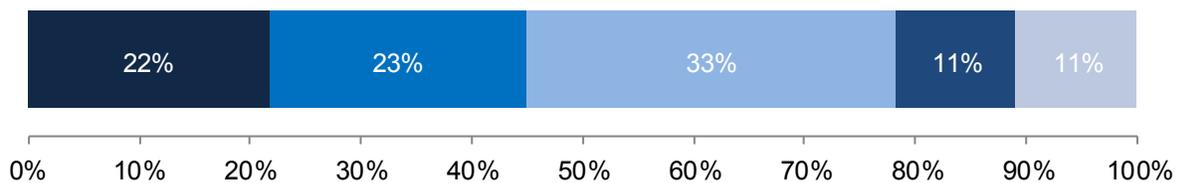
Most of my needs as a transgender person were met by my healthcare provider(s)

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neither Disagree or Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



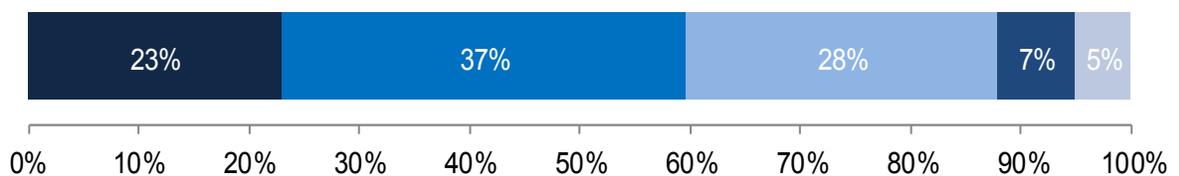
My healthcare provider(s) knew that I am transgender and they used this information to help me with medical issues

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neither Disagree or Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



I trusted my healthcare provider(s) and I followed their advice

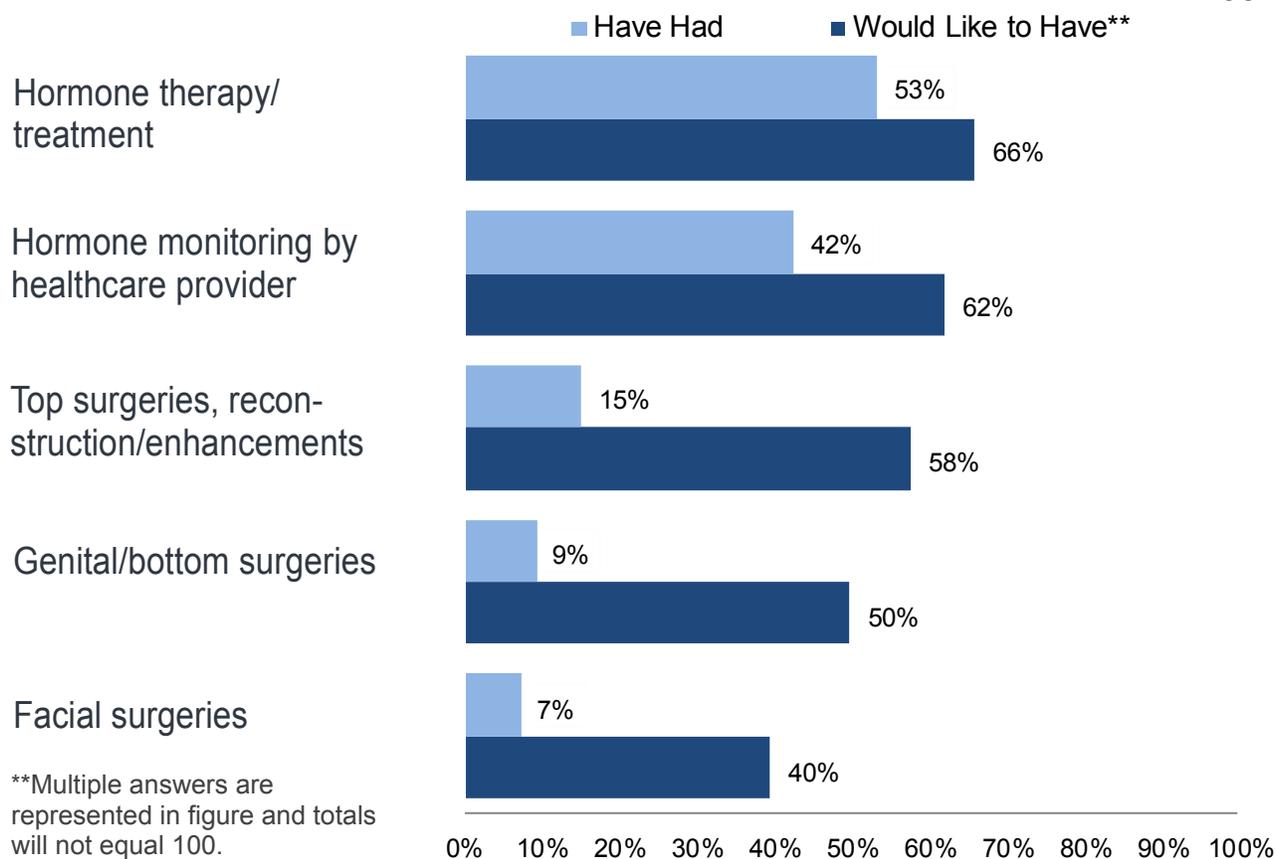
■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neither Disagree or Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



*49 Missing— Among those who did not decline healthcare in past 12 months.

FIGURE 19: Gender Conformation Procedures

N=205*

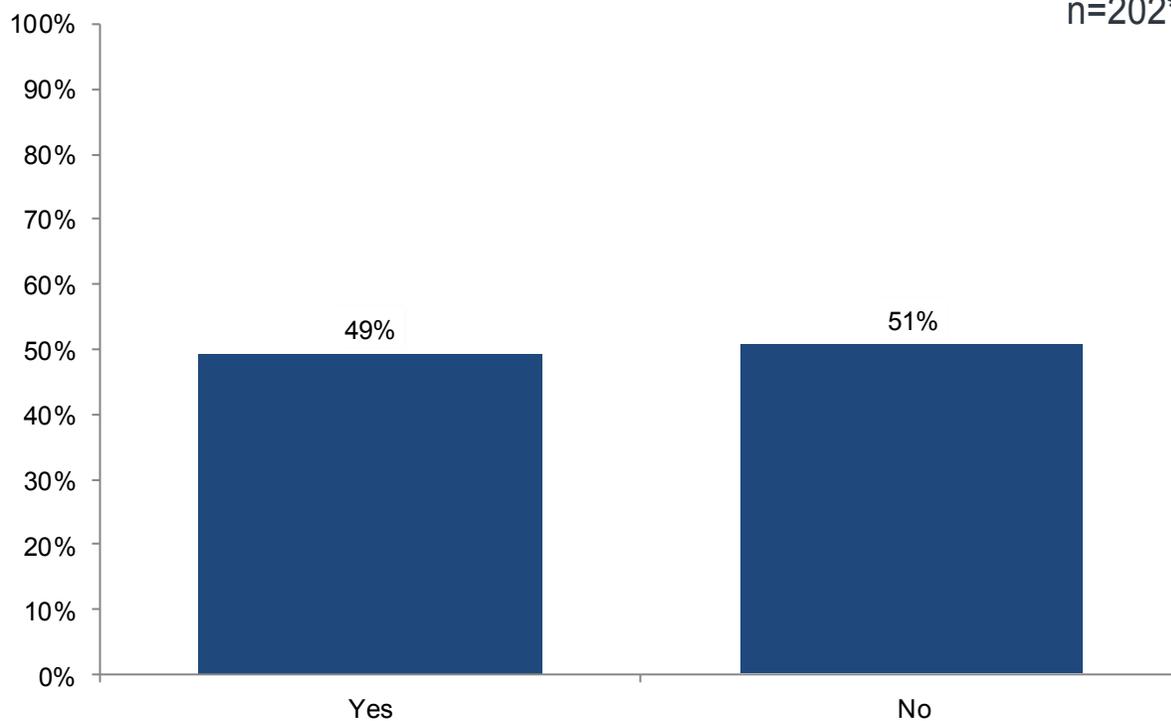


**Multiple answers are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

**If insurance covered it.

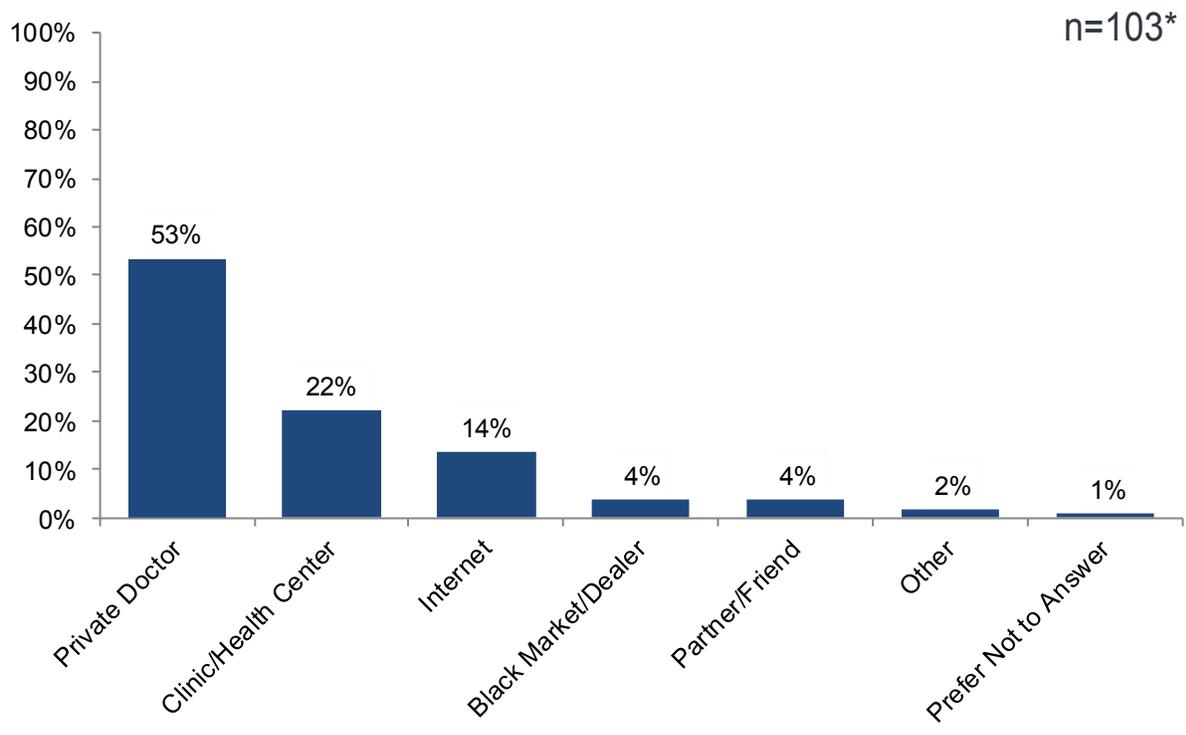
FIGURE 20: Used Hormones for Transitioning or Cosmetic Reasons (past 6 months)

n=202*



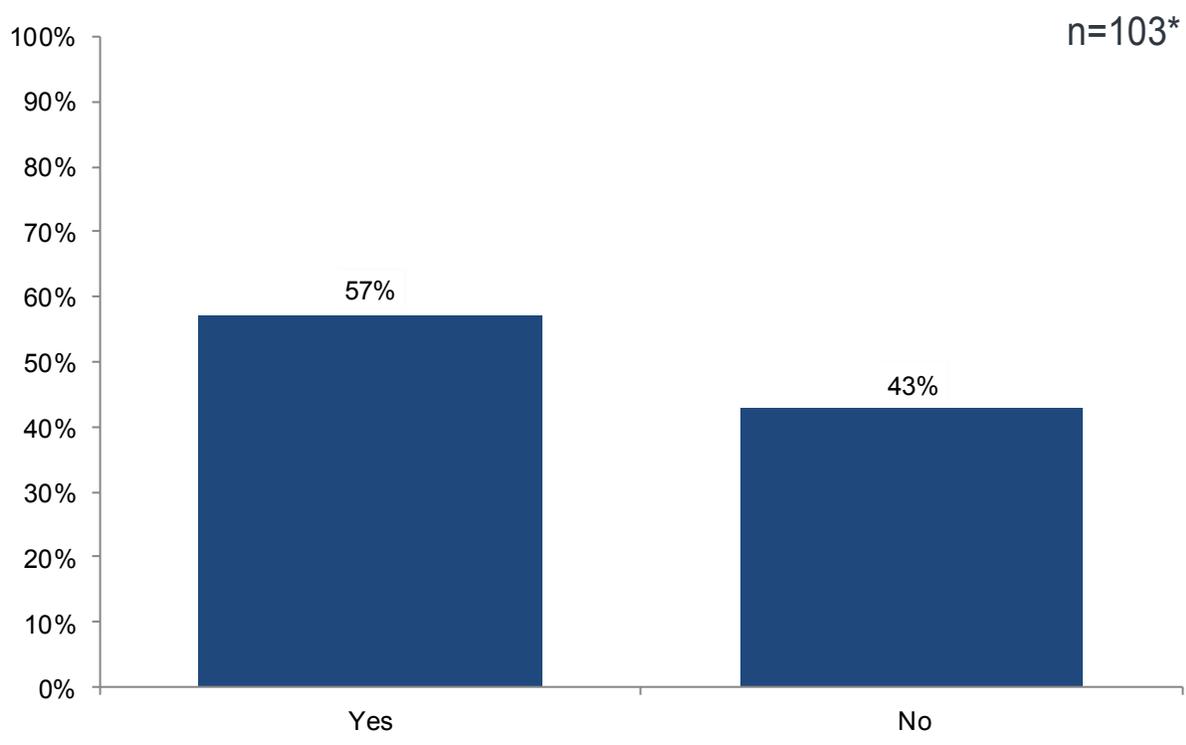
*2 Missing

FIGURE 21: Where Did You Get Hormones (past 6 months)



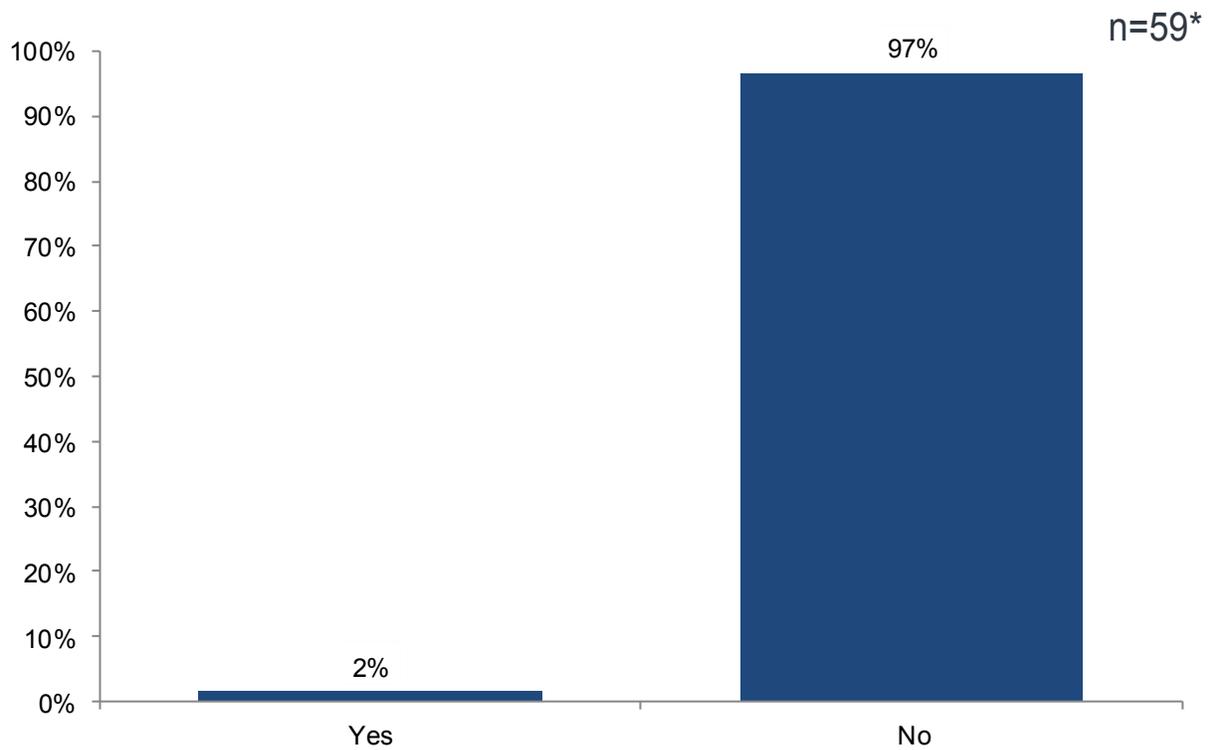
*Of the 103 who used hormones in past 6 months; 1 Missing

FIGURE 22: Injected Hormones for Purpose of Transitioning or Cosmetic Reasons (past 6 months)



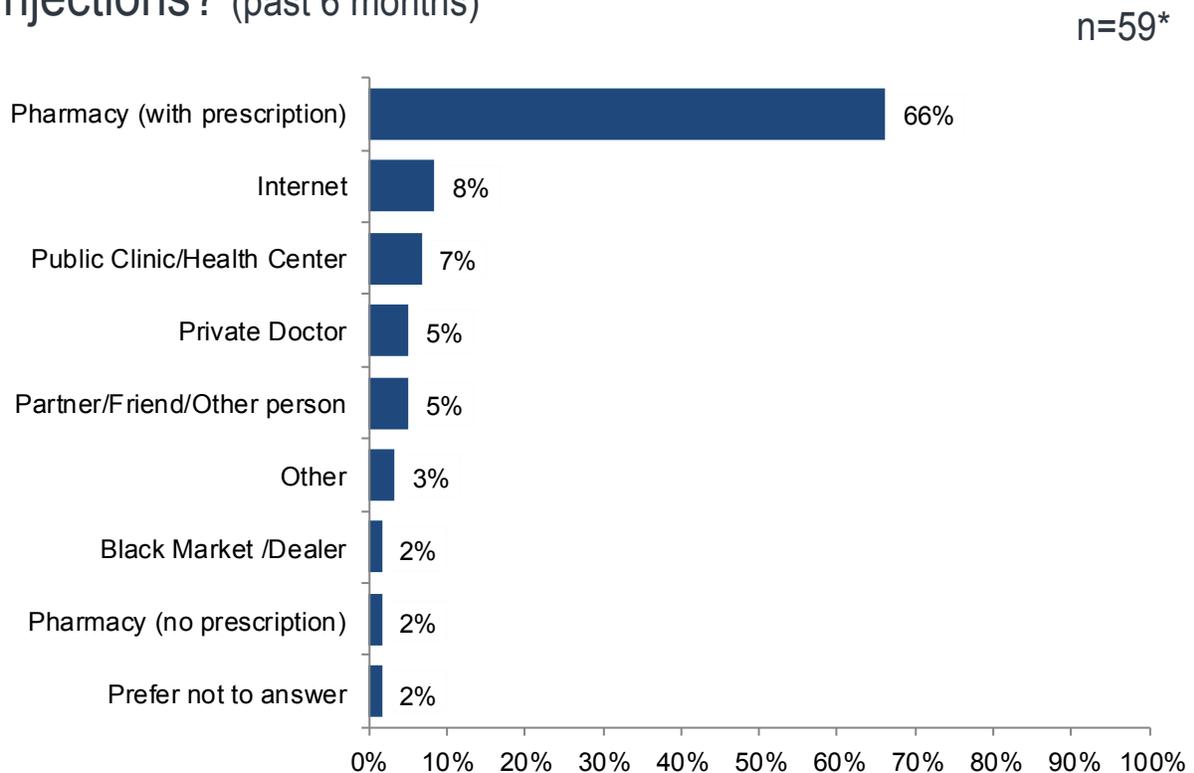
*Of the 103 who used hormones in past 6 months

FIGURE 23: Shared Needles When Injecting Hormones
(past 6 months)



*Of the 59 who injected hormones in past 6 months; 1 Missing

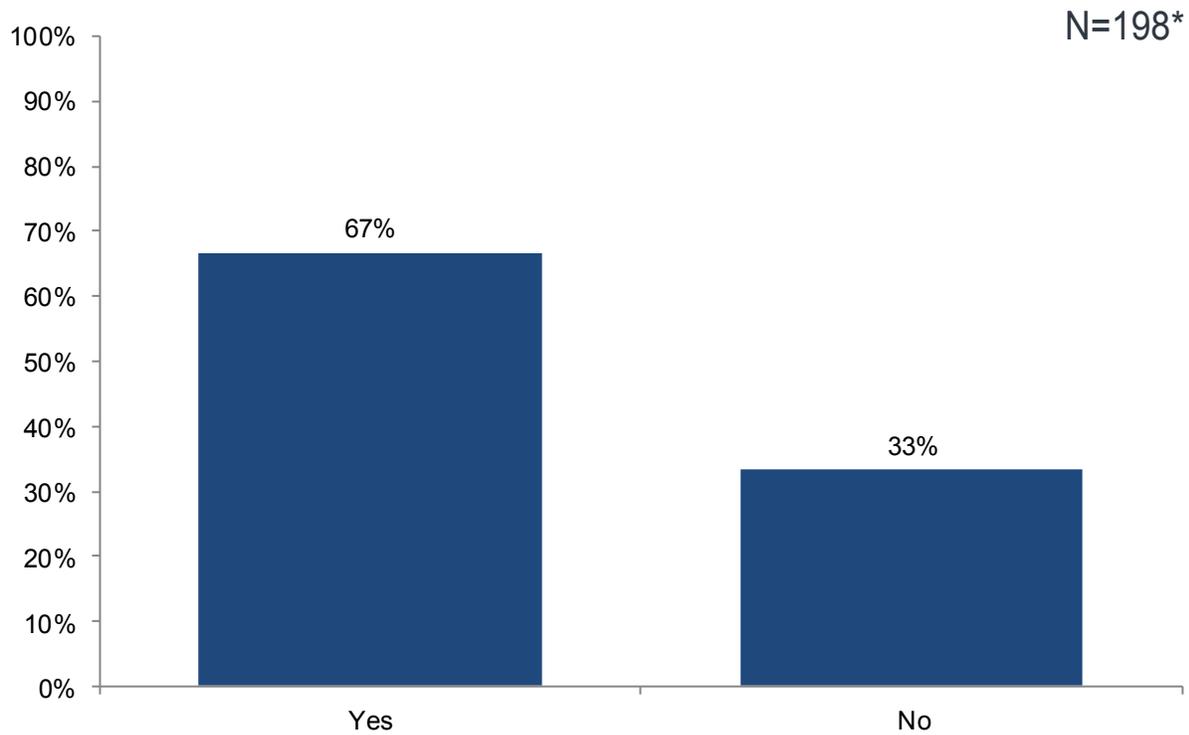
FIGURE 24: Where Did you Get Needles for Hormones Injections? (past 6 months)



*Of the 59 who injected hormones in past 6 months

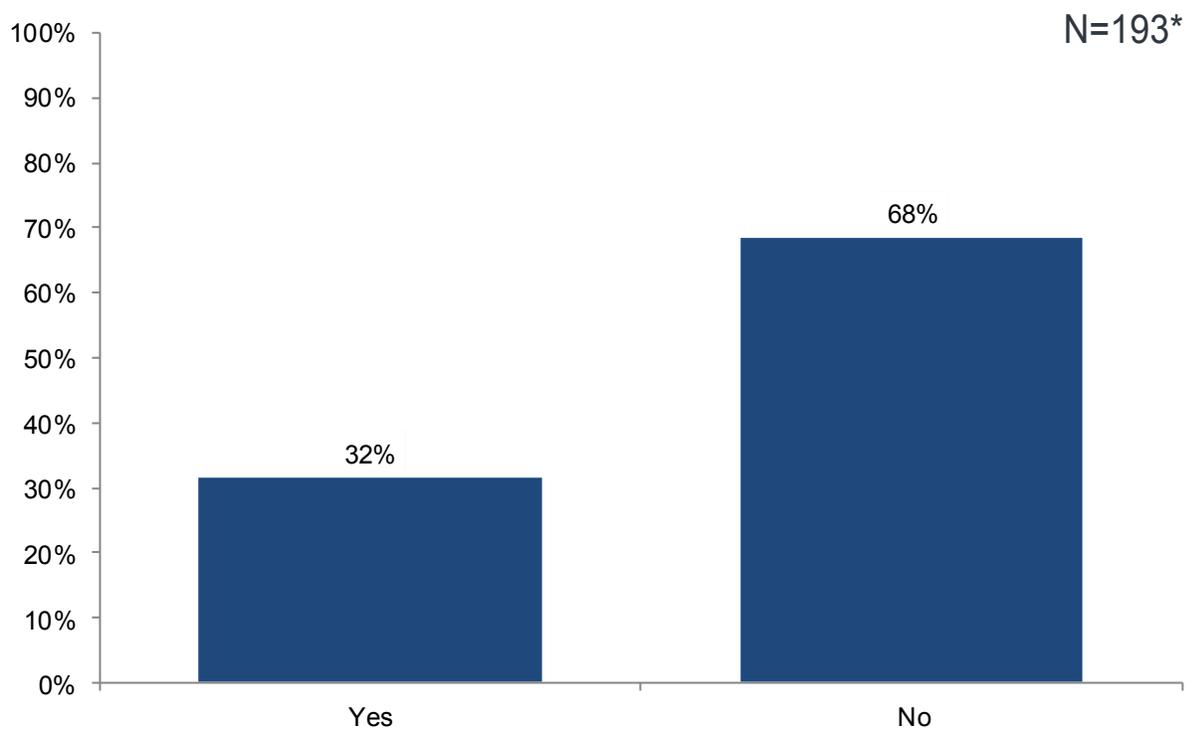
VICTIMIZATION AND DISCRIMINATION

FIGURE 25: Been Hit, Kicked, Punched, or Physically Hurt By Someone on Purpose (ever)



*7 Missing

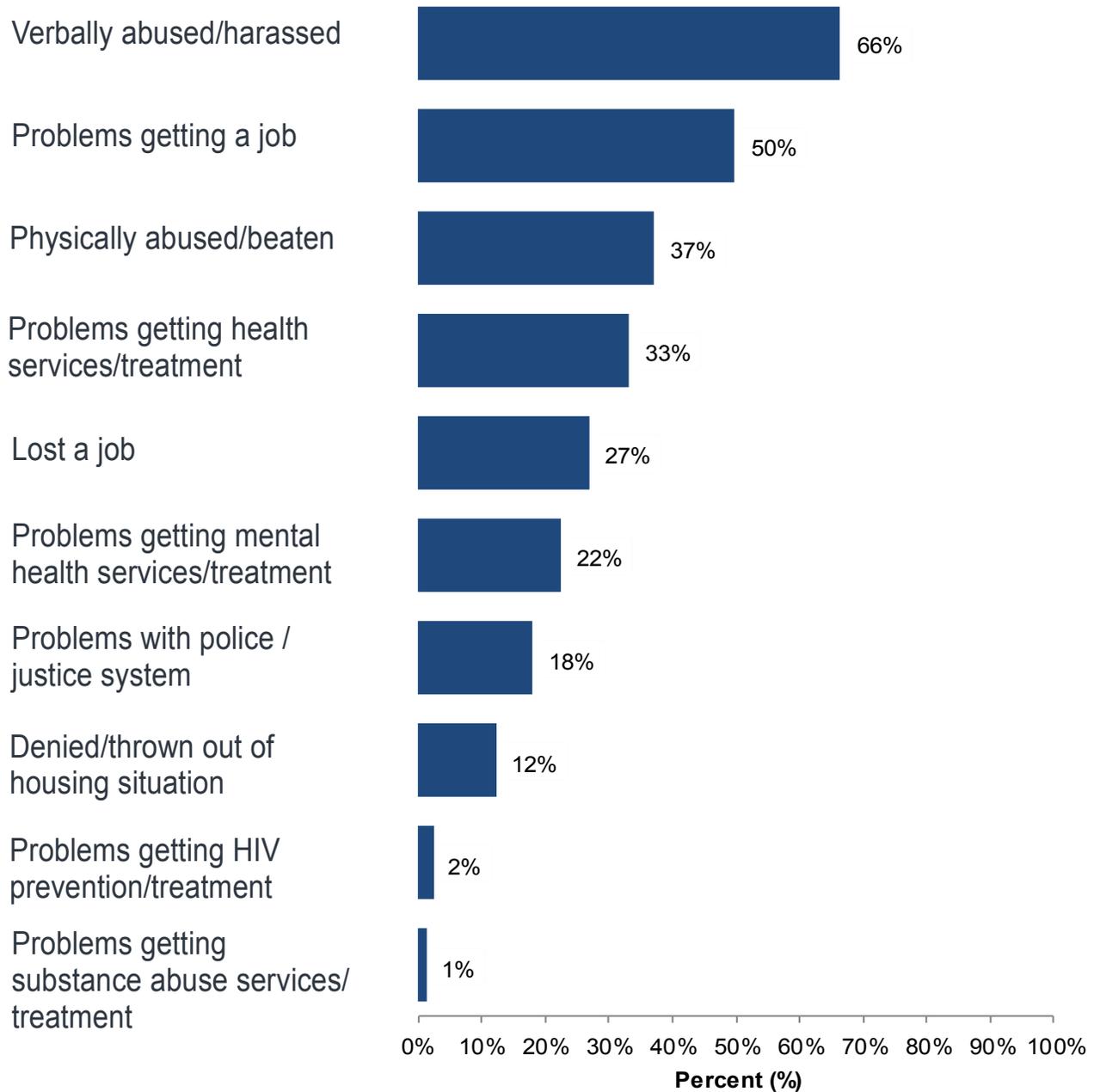
FIGURE 26: Been Forced or Pressured to Have Sex When You Did Not Want to (ever)



*12 Missing

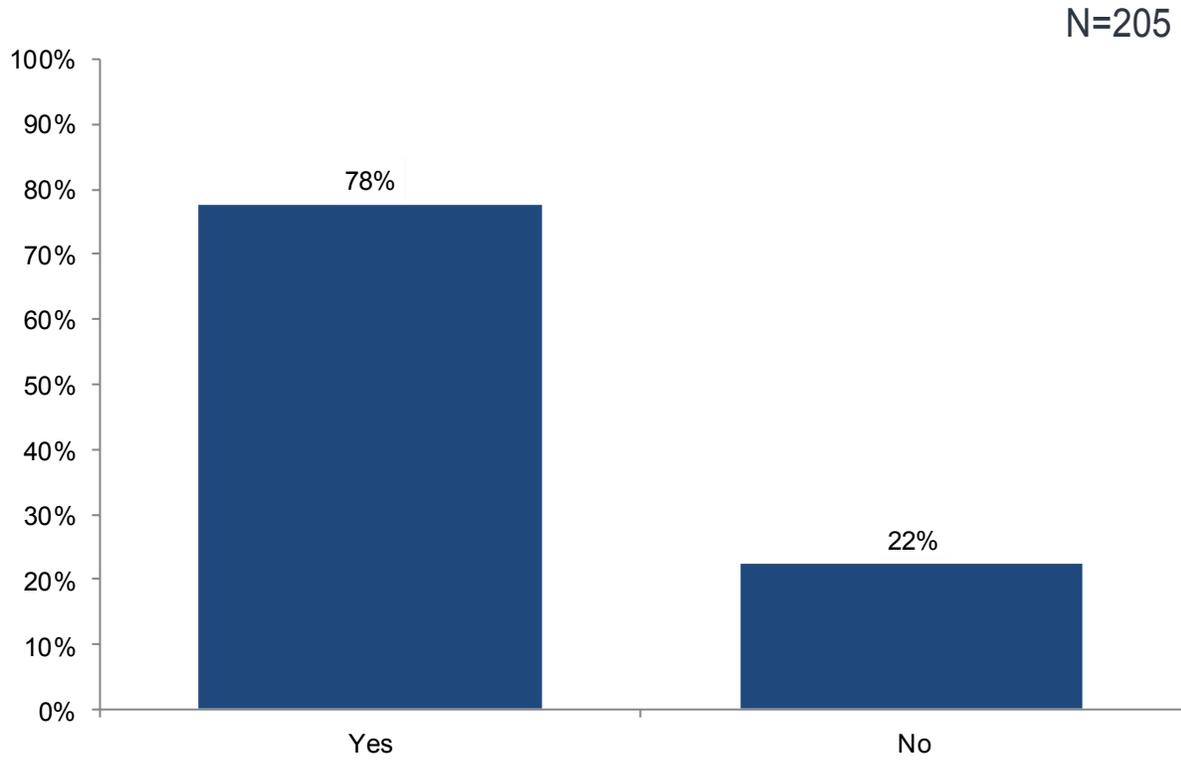
FIGURE 27: Had Any of the Following Problems and Thought it Was Because of Your Gender Identity or Expression

N=205*



**Multiple answers are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

FIGURE 28: Are You Aware That There Is a Law in Nevada that Prohibits the Act of Discrimination Against Someone Based on Their “Gender Identity or Expression” In Employment, Housing, and Public Accommodations?



SEXUAL BEHAVIORS, HIV, STDs

FIGURE 29: Sexual Orientation

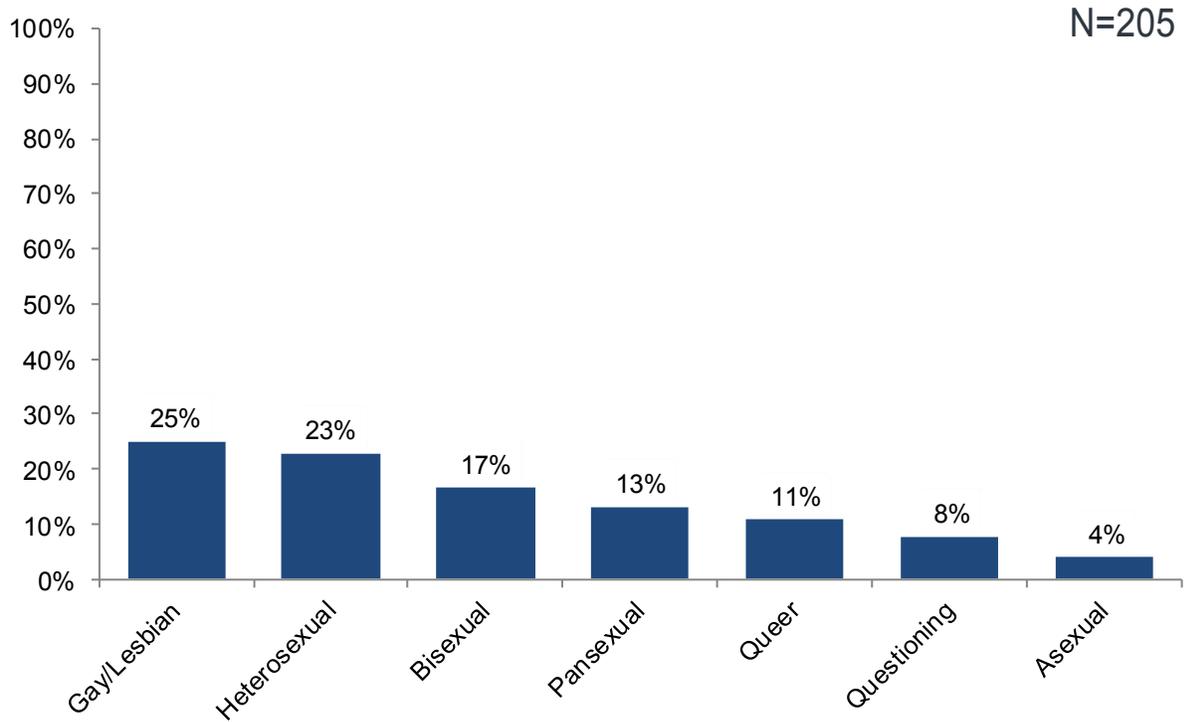
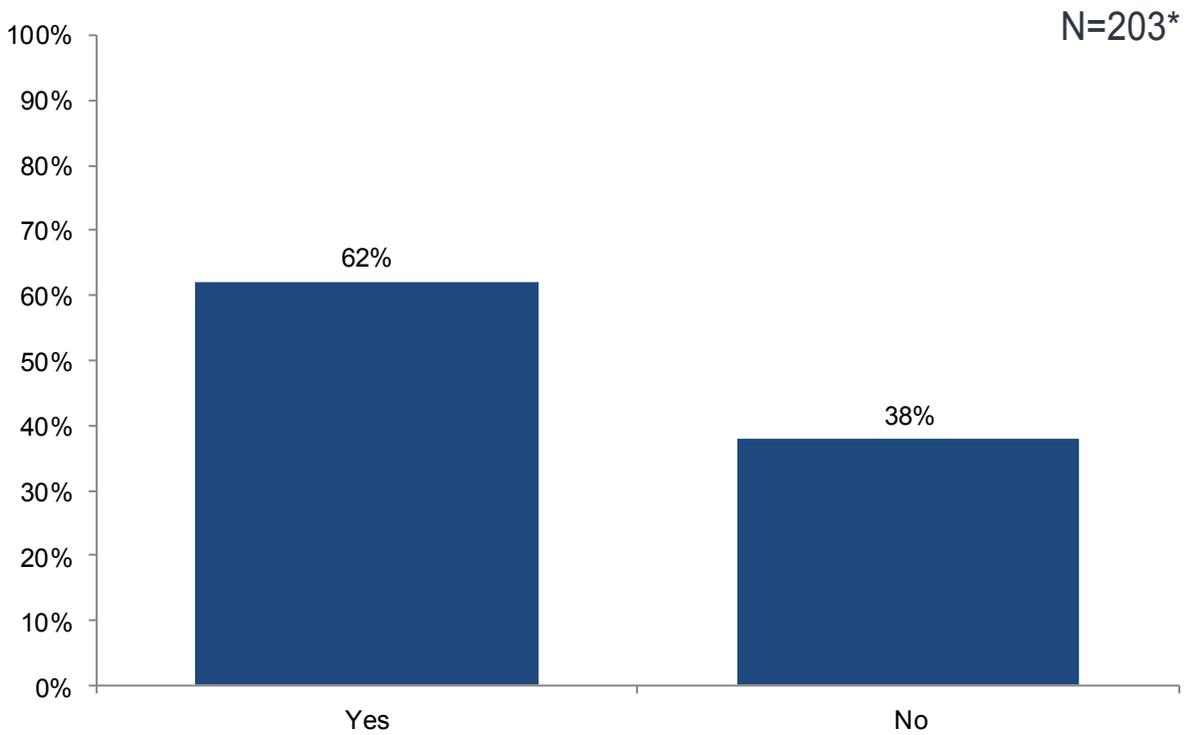
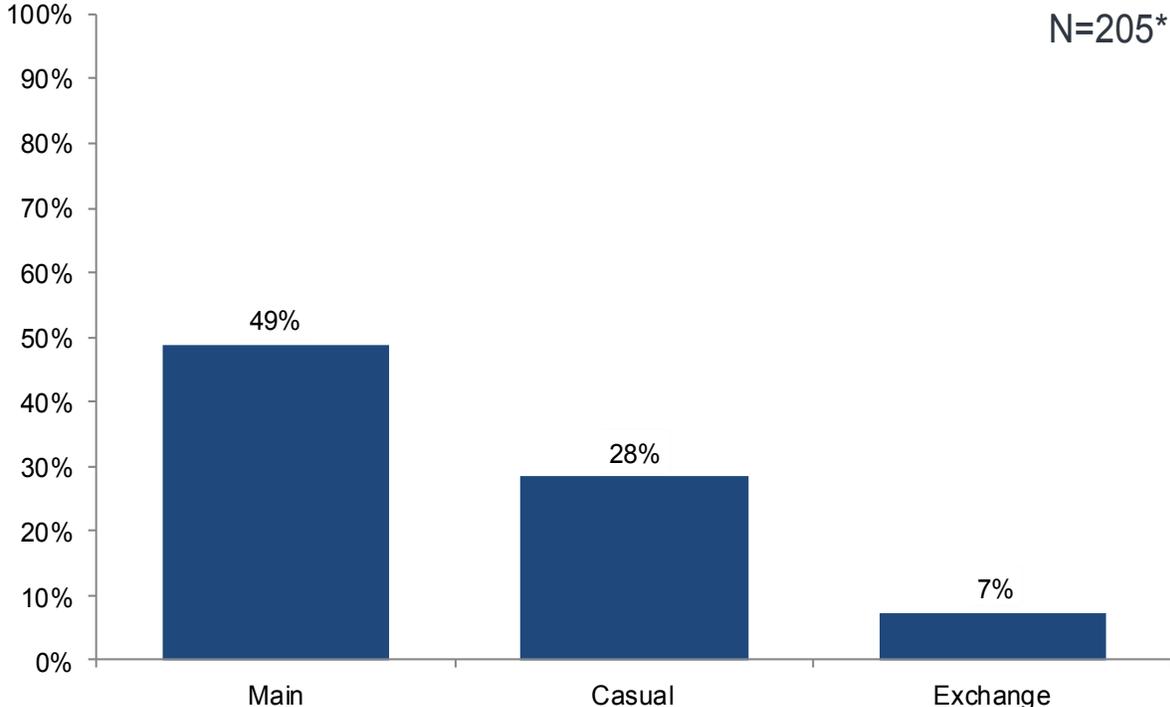


FIGURE 30: Had Vaginal, Anal or Oral Sex with Another Person (past 6 months)



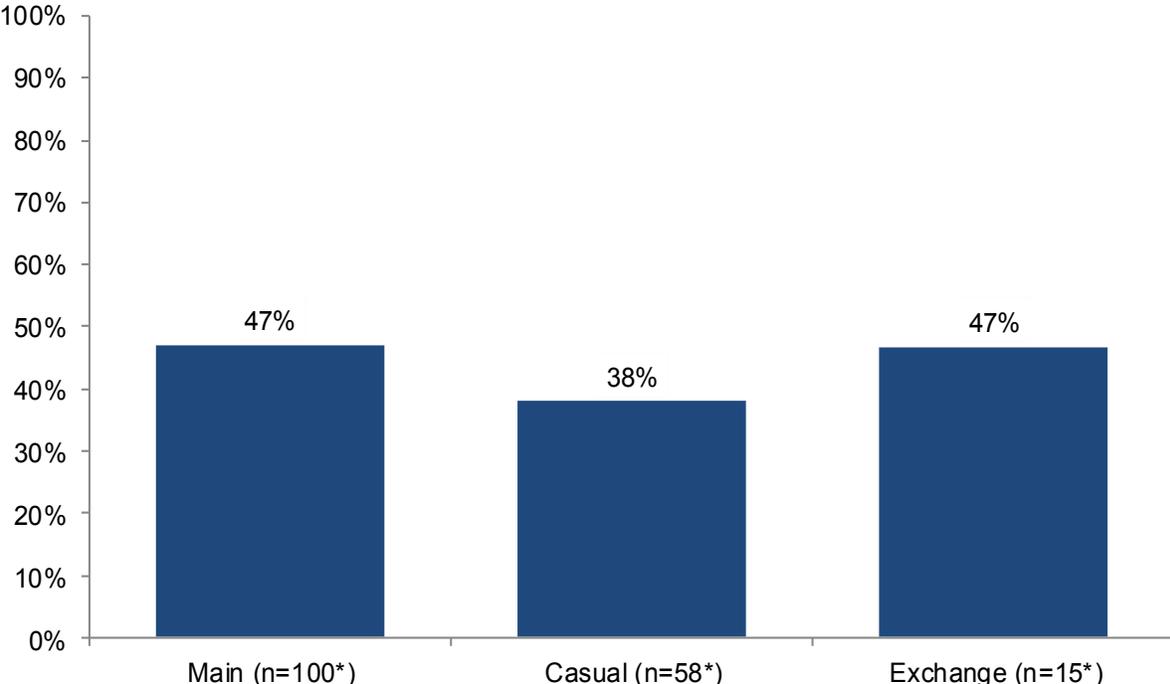
*2 Missing

FIGURE 31: Type of Partners with Whom You Had Vaginal, Anal, or Oral Sex (past 6 months)



*Multiple questions are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.
 **Main is a partner you would call boyfriend, girlfriend, significant other, or life partner;
 Casual is a partner you have sex with but do not consider your main partner;
 Exchange is a partner you exchange sex for money, drugs, shelter or food.

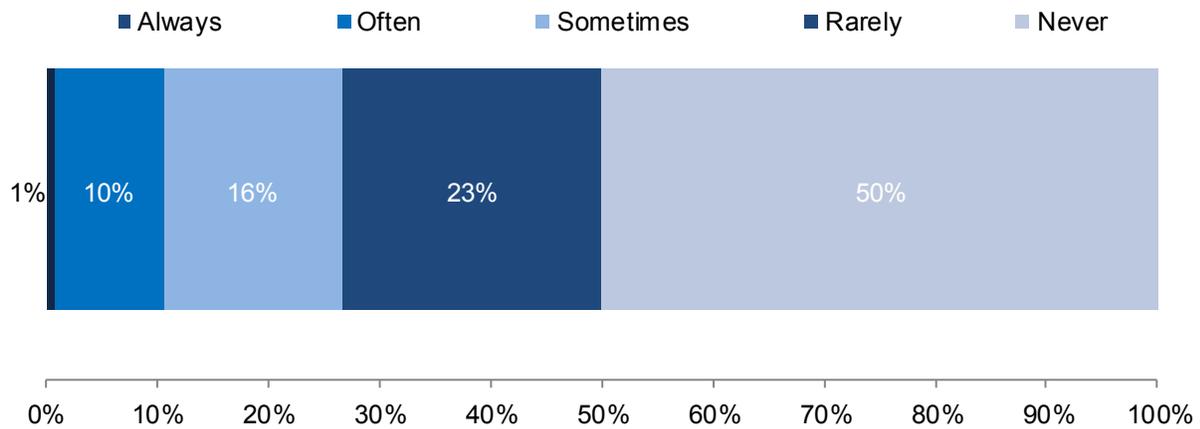
FIGURE 32: Did Not Use a Condom During Vaginal or Anal Sex by Partner Type (past 6 months)



*Among those who had this type of partner in past 6 months. Multiple questions are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

FIGURE 33: How Often Were You Drunk, High, or Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs When you Engaged in Any Sexual Activity? (past 6 months)

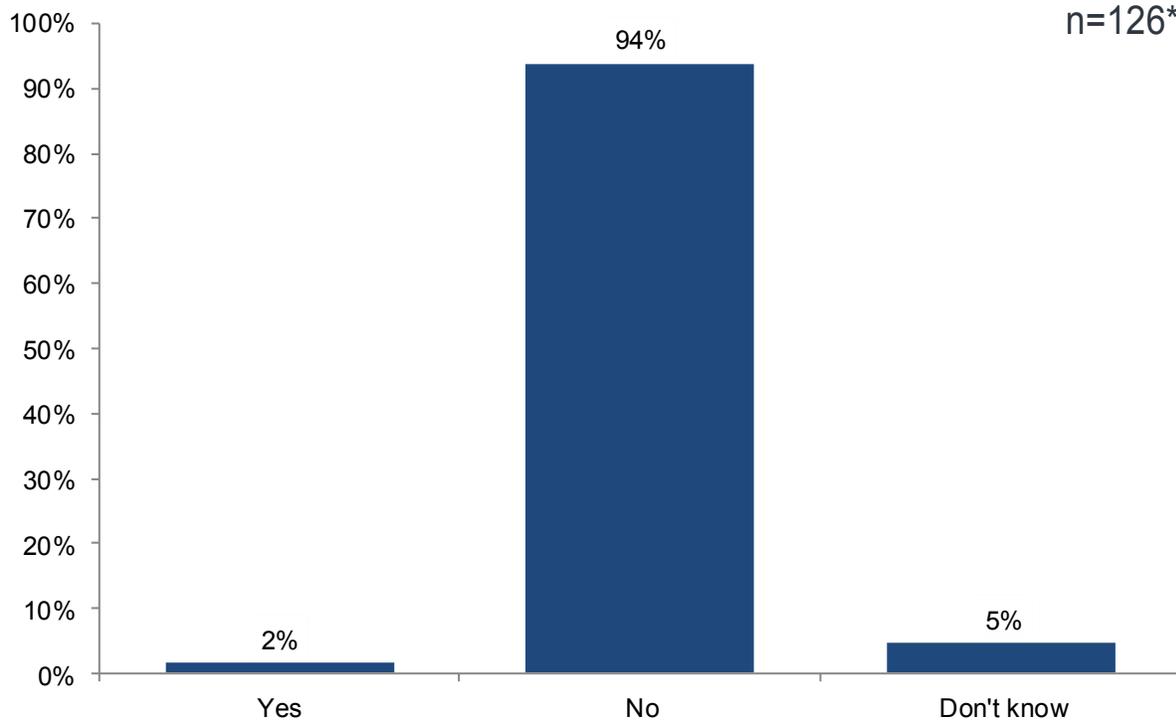
n=124*



*2 Missing; Among those who had sex in the past 6 months

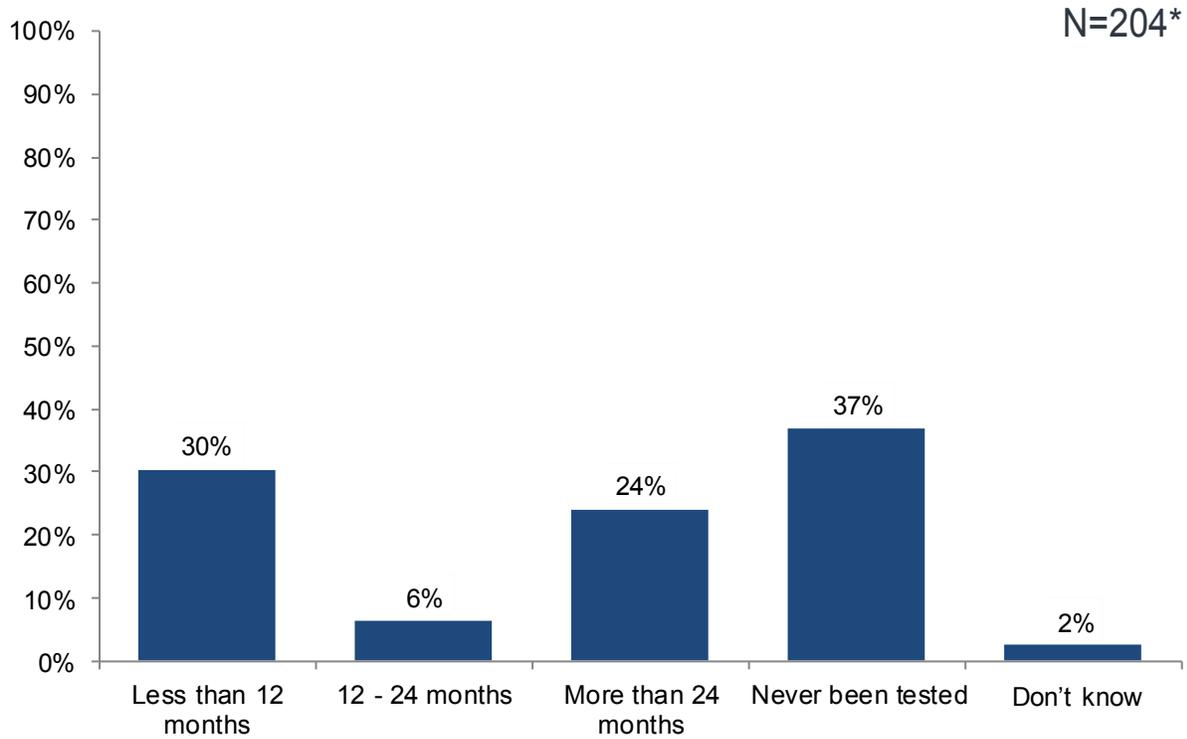
FIGURE 34: When You Engaged in Any Sexual Activity, to Your Knowledge Were Any Partners HIV Positive? (past 6 months)

n=126*



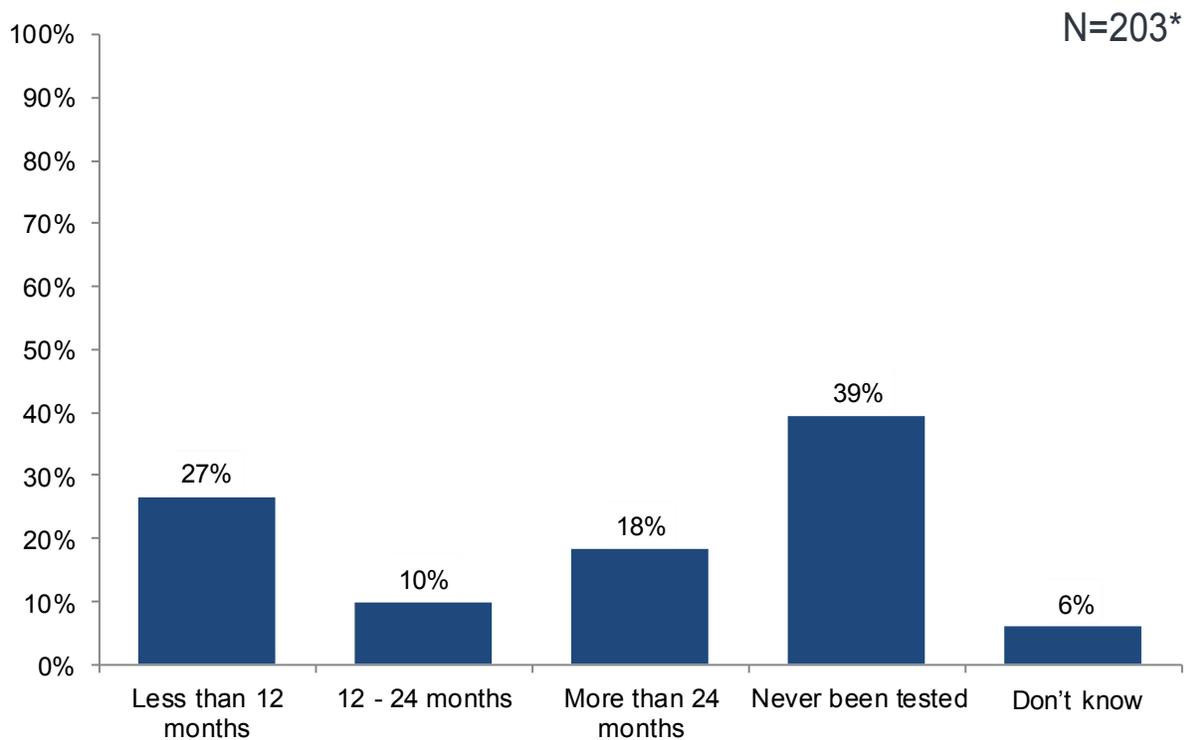
*Among the 126 who had sex in the past 6 months.

FIGURE 35: Last HIV Test



*1 Missing

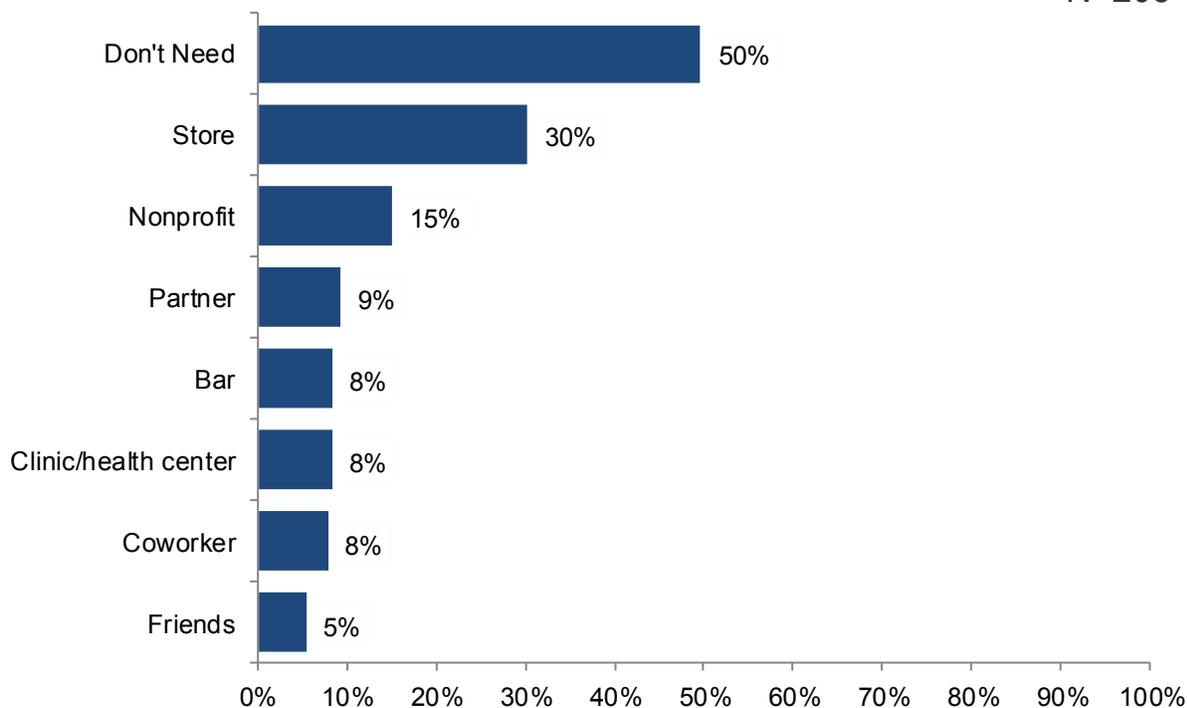
FIGURE 36: Last Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Test



*2 Missing

FIGURE 37: Where Do You Usually Get Condoms (past 6 months)

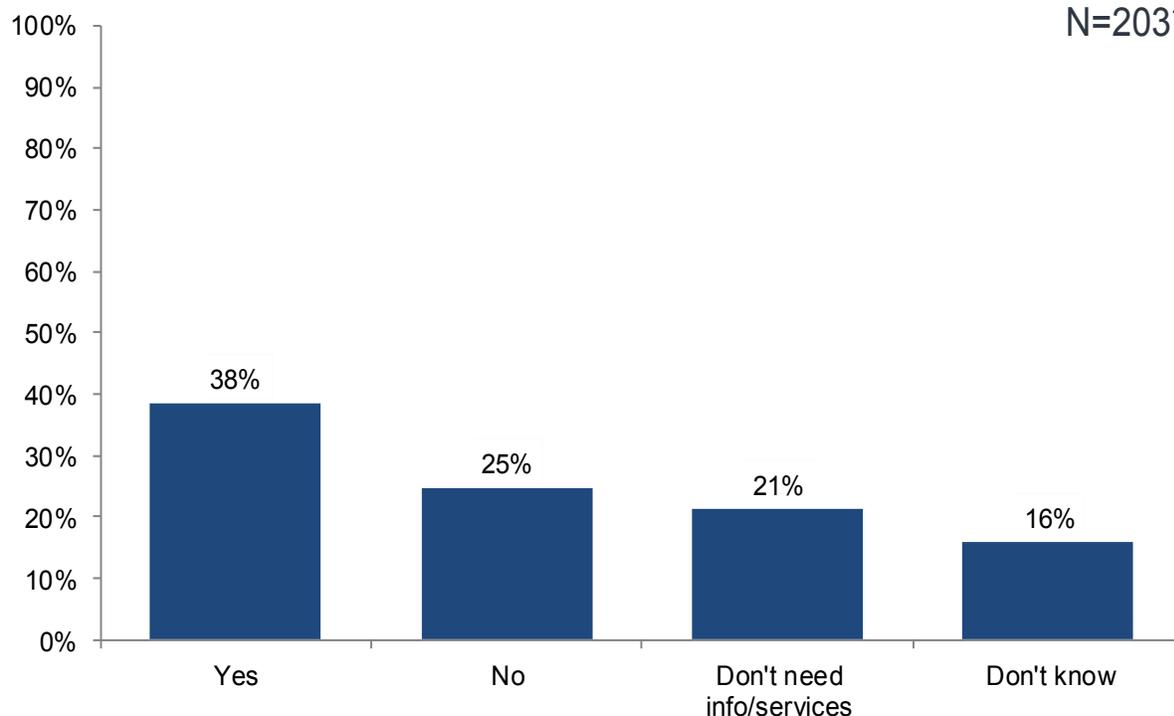
N=205*



*Multiple answers are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

FIGURE 38: Is There a Place to Get HIV/STI Information/ Services that are Sensitive to the Needs of Transgender People

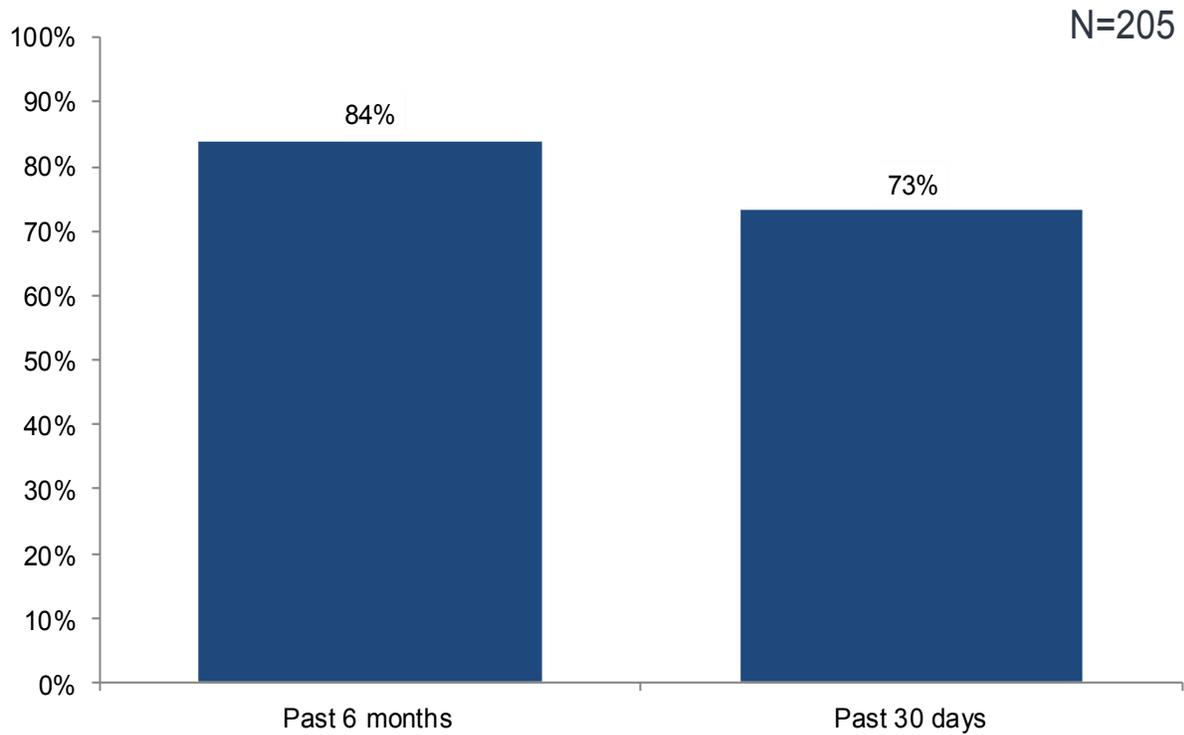
N=203*



*2 Missing

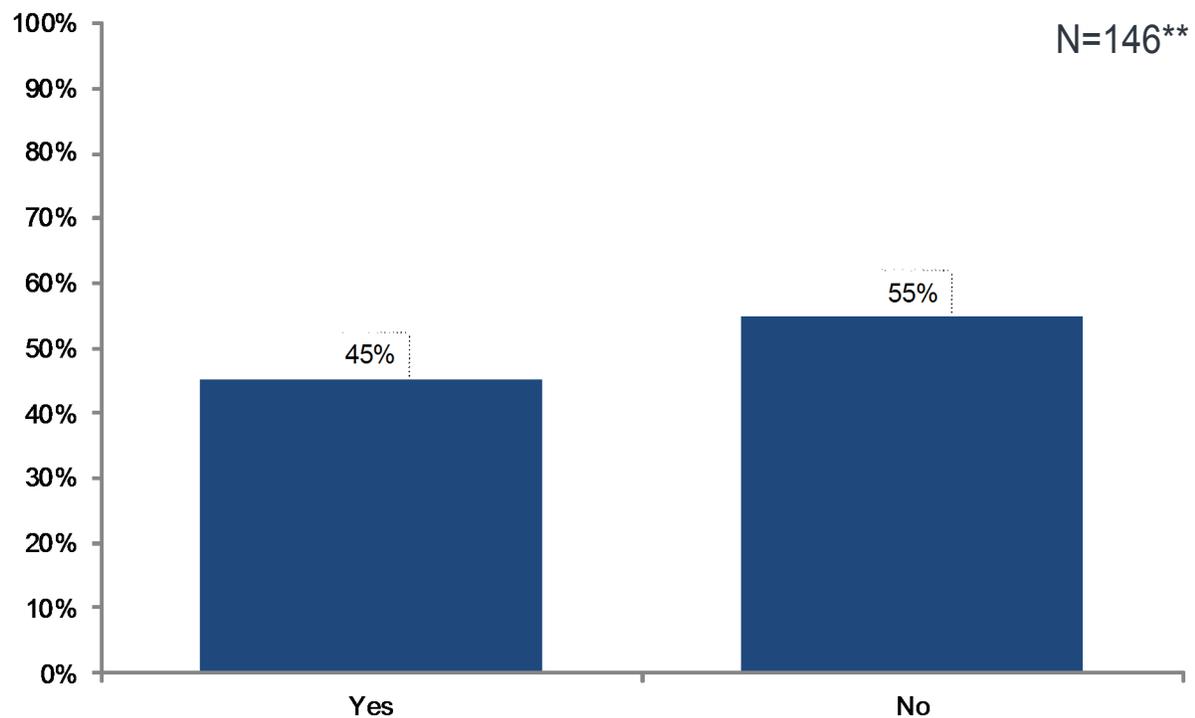
SUBSTANCE USE

FIGURE 39: Drank Alcoholic Beverages such as Beer, Wine, or Liquor (past 6 months and past 30 days)



*Multiple questions are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

FIGURE 40: Binge Drinking* (past 30 days)



*Five or more drinks on the same occasion

**Among those who drank in the past 30 days

FIGURE 41: Substance Use (ever and past 6 months)

N=205

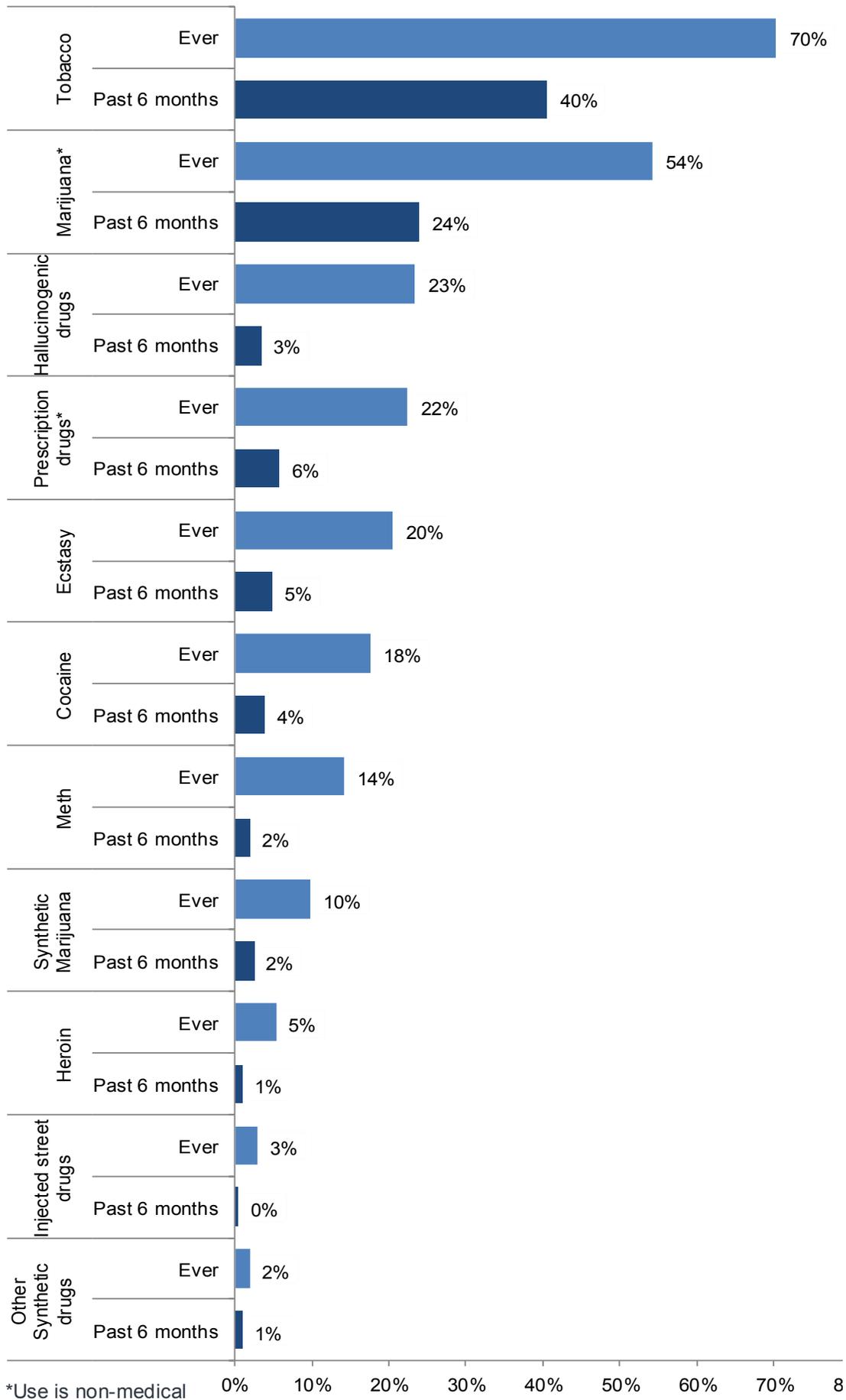


FIGURE 42: Been to an Alcohol or Drug Treatment Program (ever)

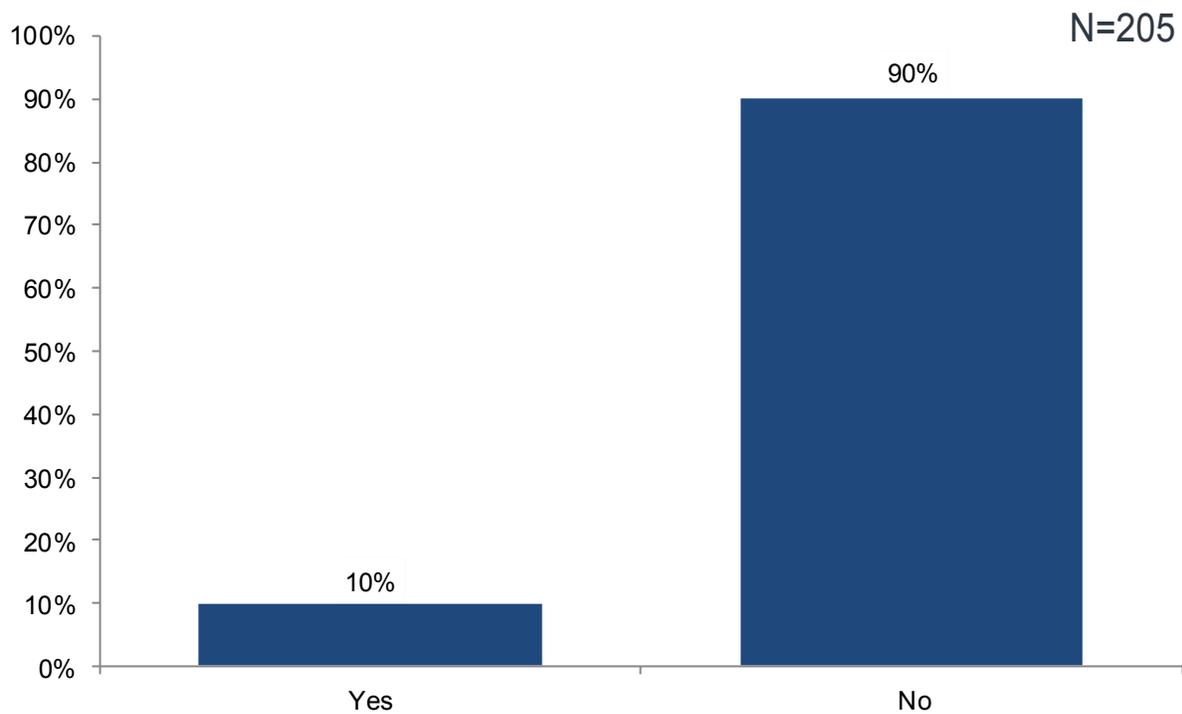
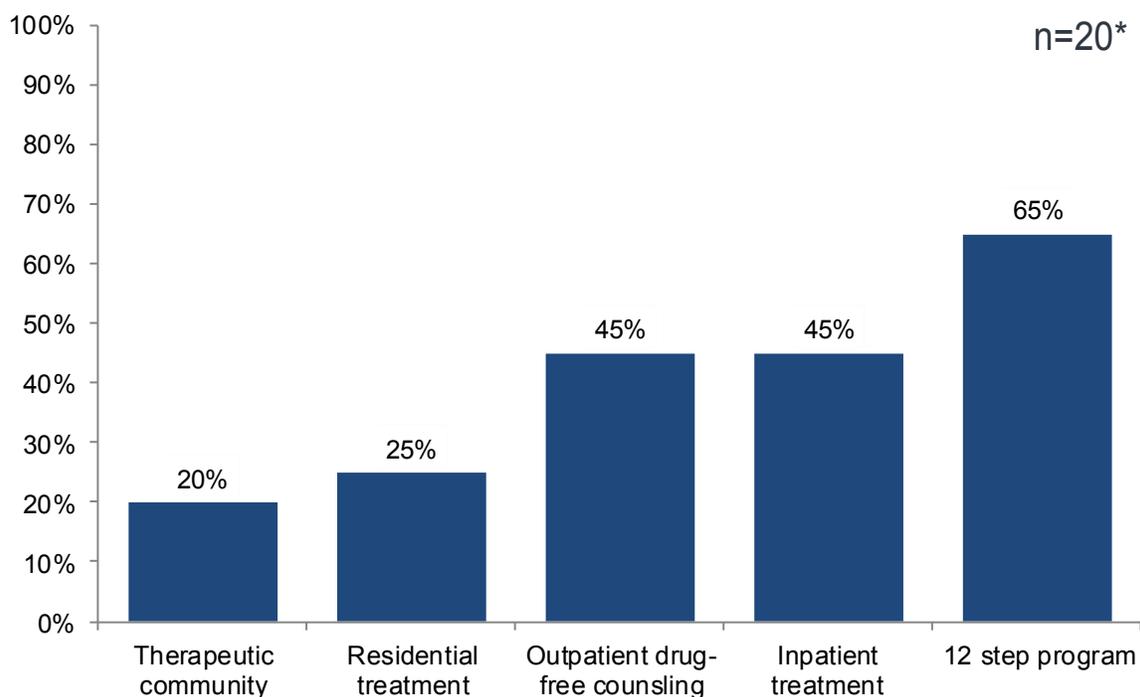


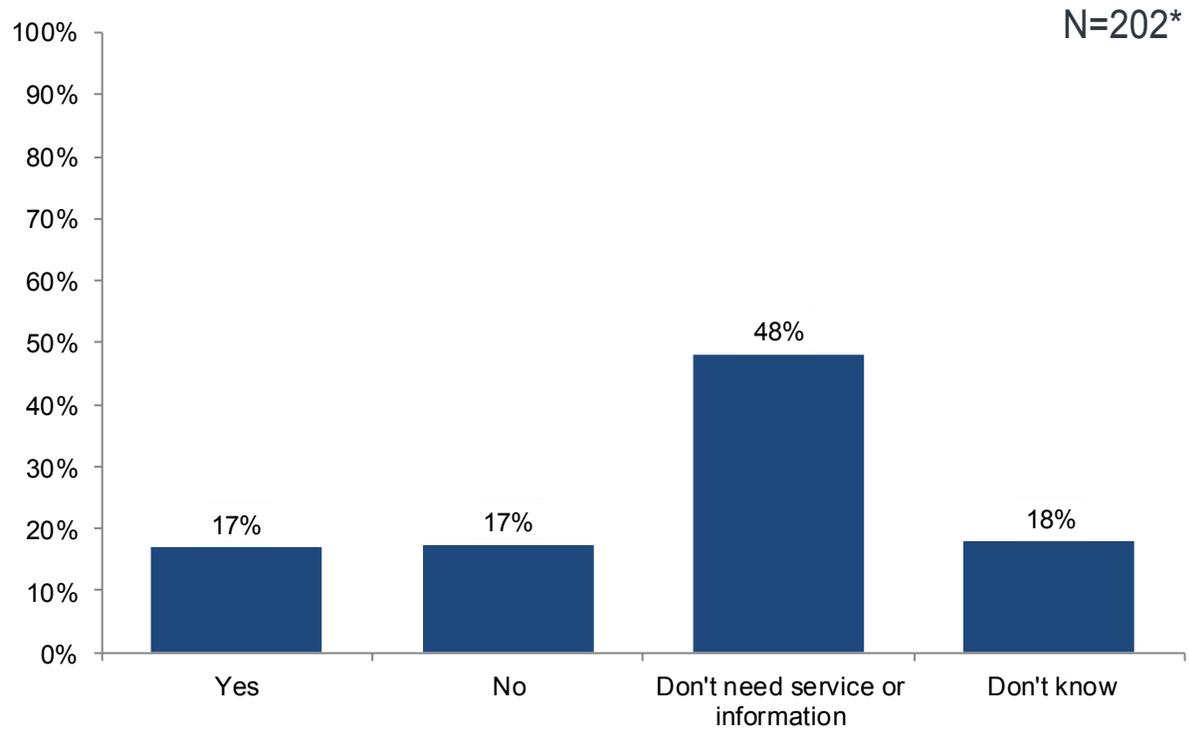
FIGURE 43: Type of Alcohol or Drug Treatment Program*



*Among those who have ever been to an alcohol or drug treatment program.

*Multiple answers are represented in figure and totals will not equal 100.

FIGURE 44: Is There a Place to Get Substance Abuse Information/Services that are Sensitive to the Needs of Transgender People



*3 Missing

MENTAL HEALTH

FIGURE 45: Indicate How You Feel About the Following Statements (Social Support Scale³)

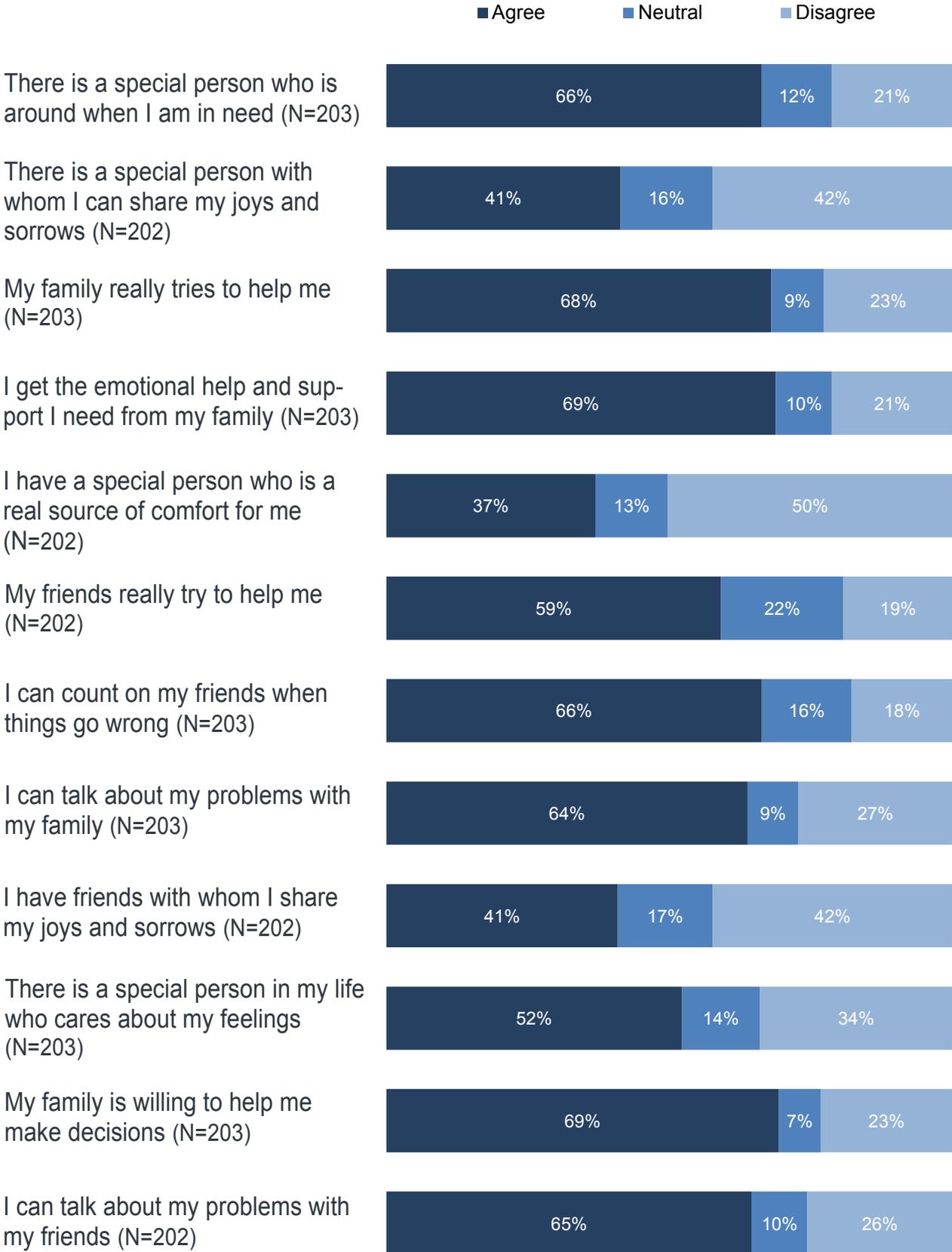
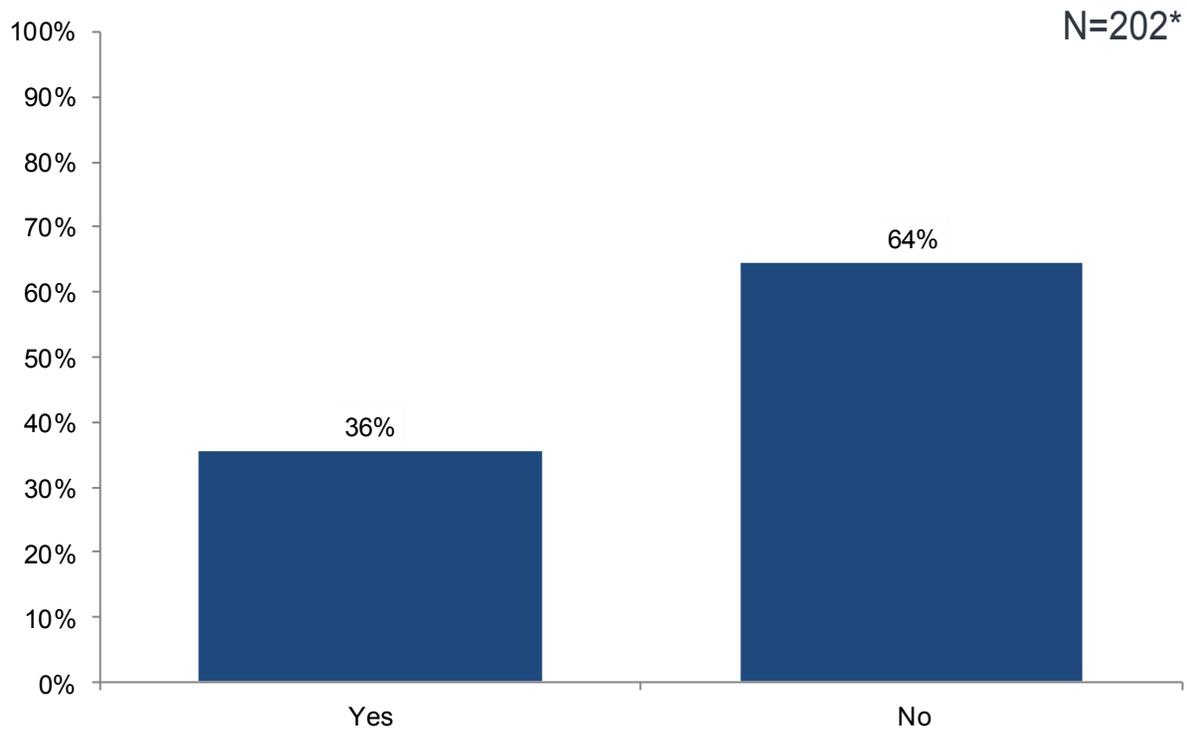


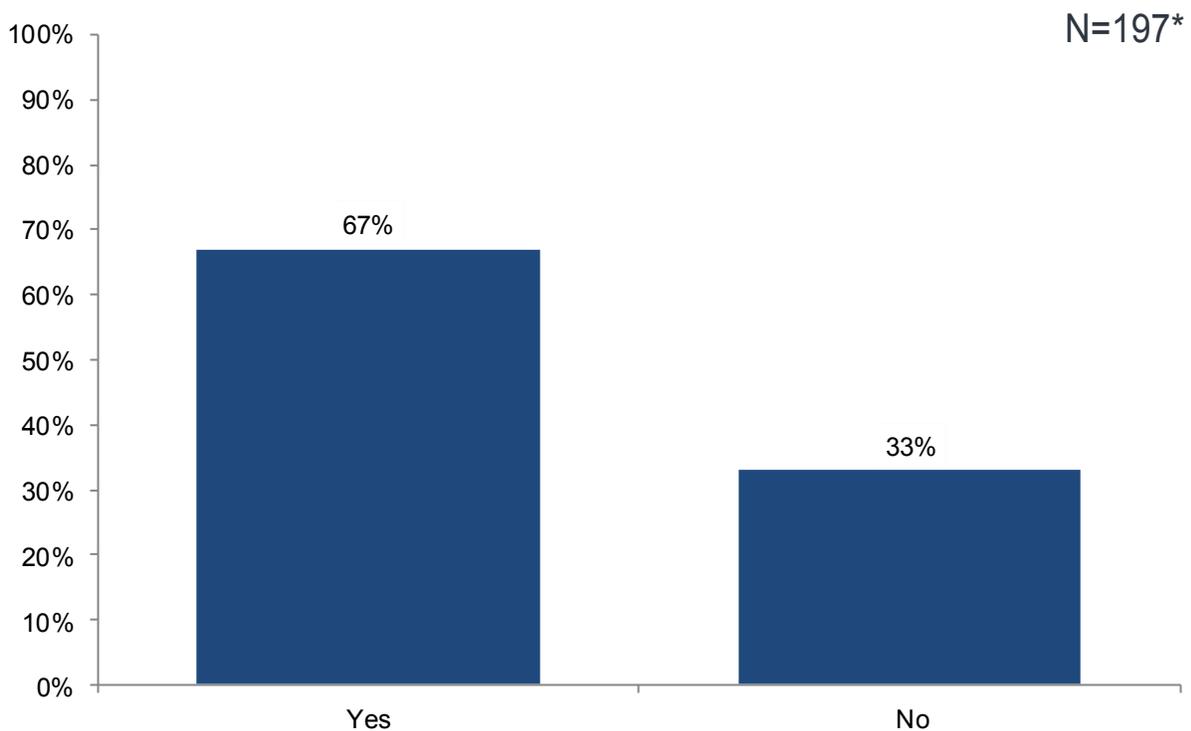
FIGURE 46: Met the Clinical Cut-off for Psychological Distress (Psychological Distress Scale BSI-18⁴)**



*3 Missing

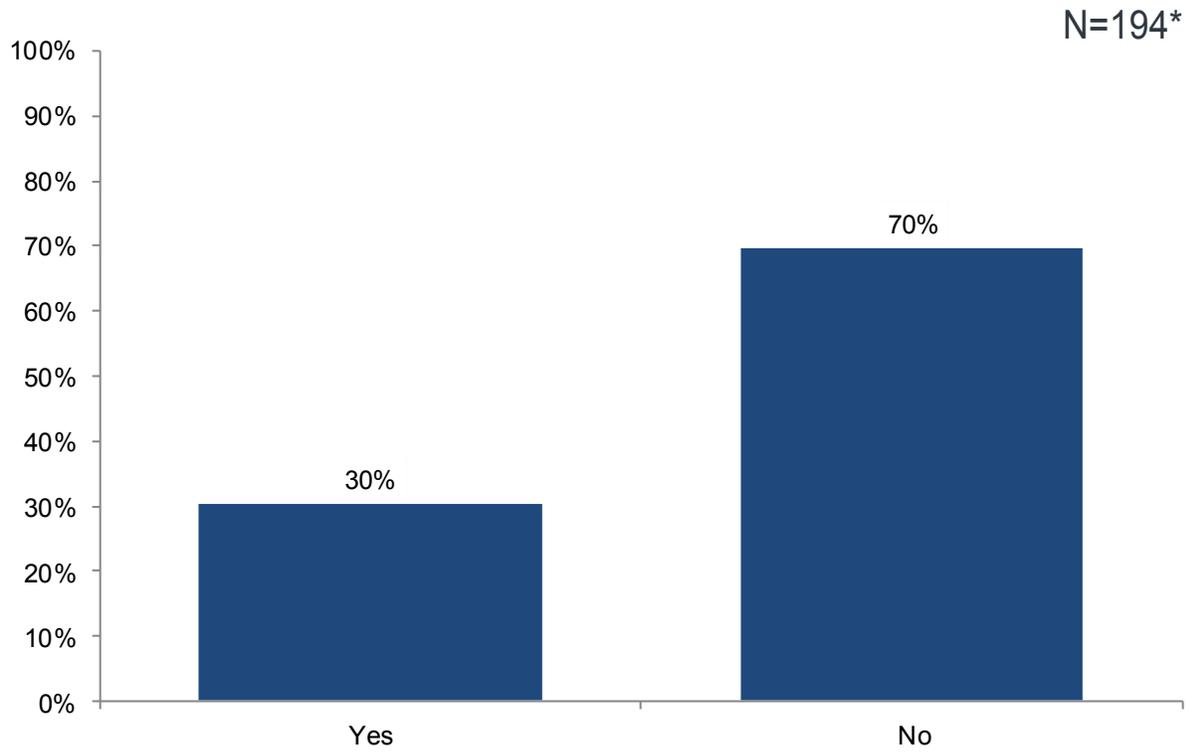
** Psychological distress includes depression, anxiety, and somatization

FIGURE 47: Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide (ever)



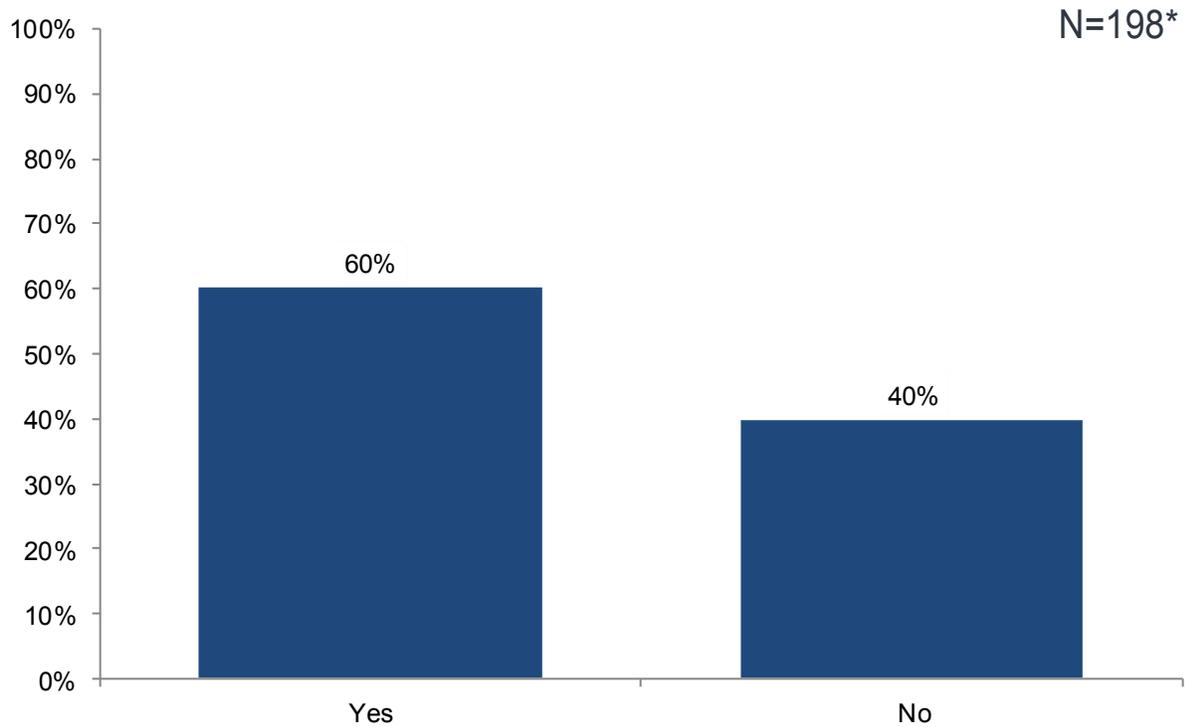
*8 Missing

FIGURE 48: Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide
(past 6 months)



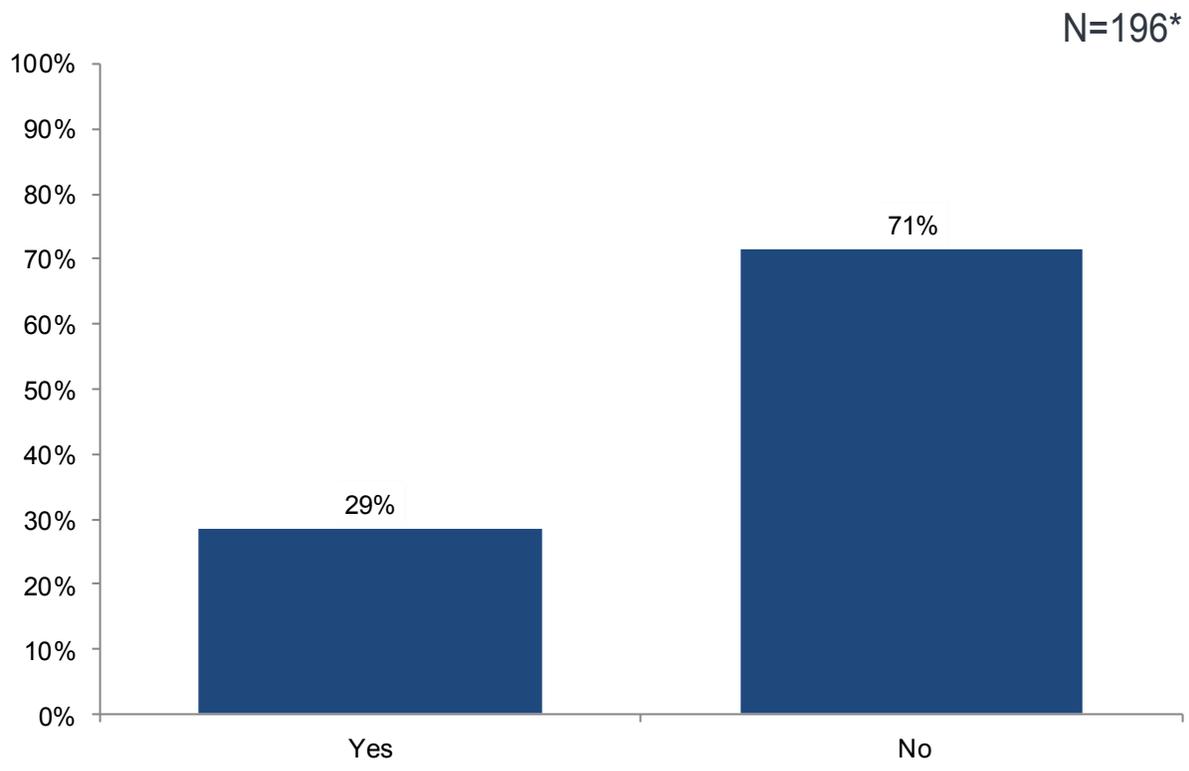
*11 Missing

FIGURE 49: Made a Plan to Attempt Suicide (ever)



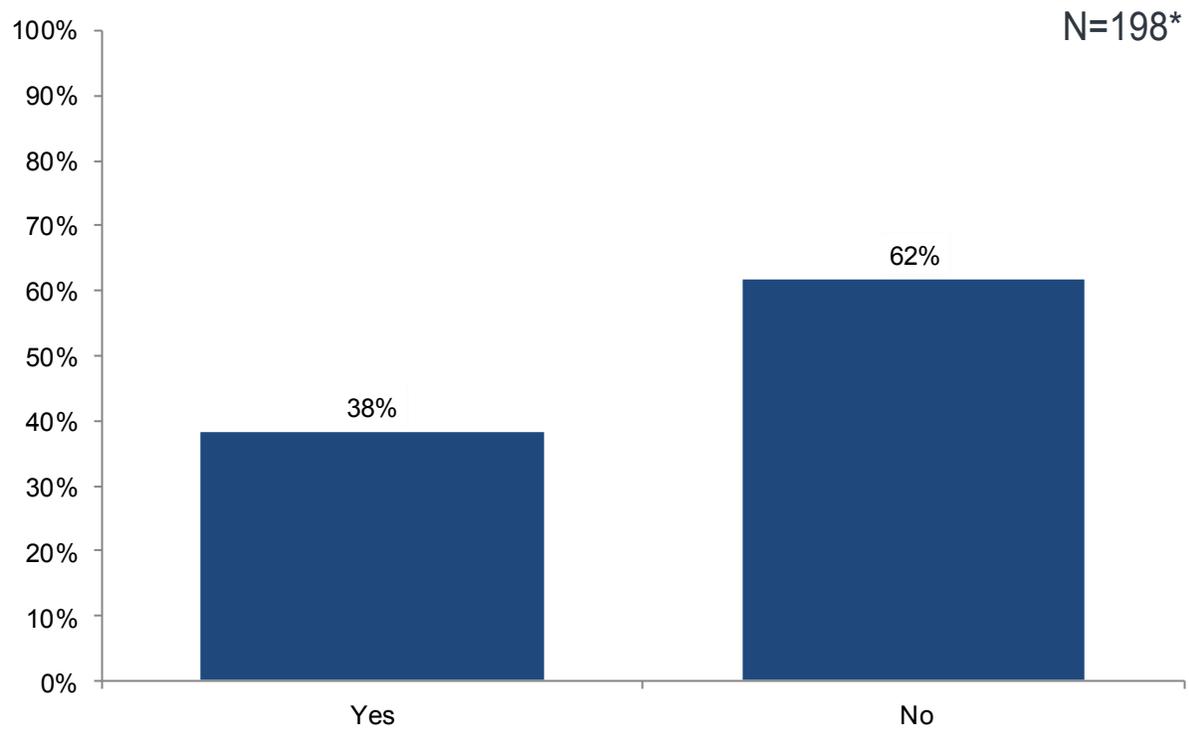
*7 Missing

FIGURE 50: Made a Plan to Attempt Suicide (past 6 months)



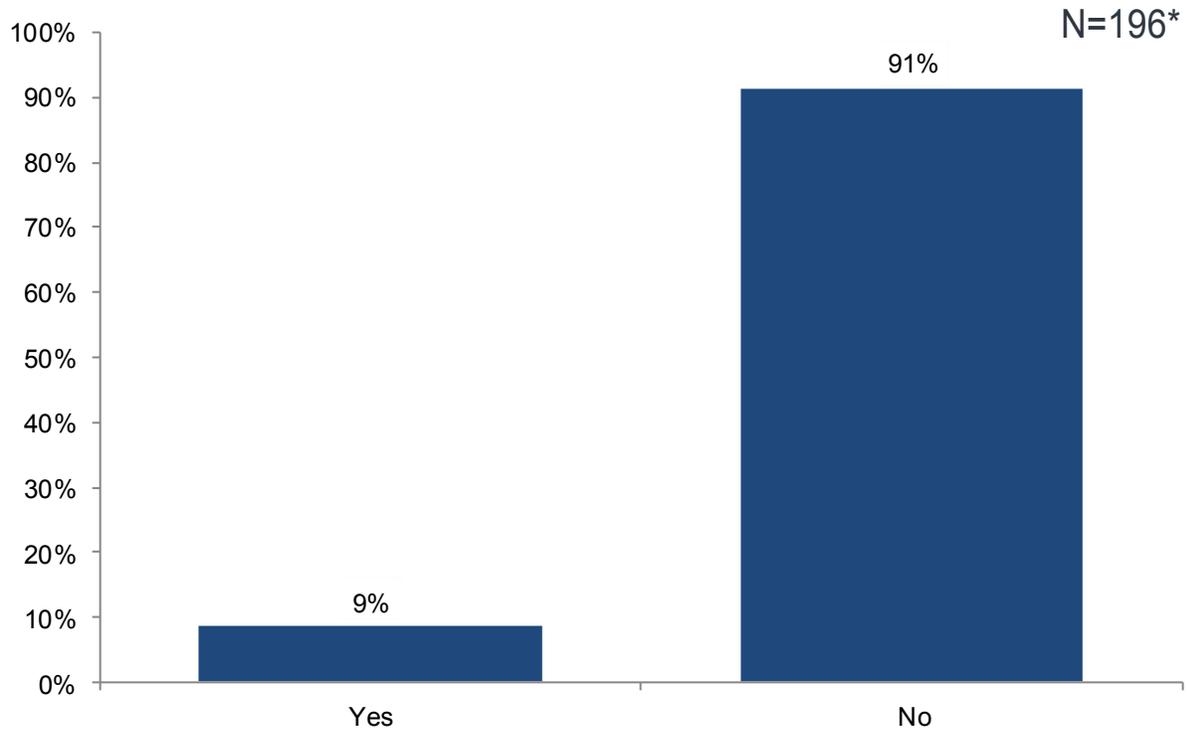
*9 Missing

FIGURE 51: Attempted Suicide With Intent to Die (ever)



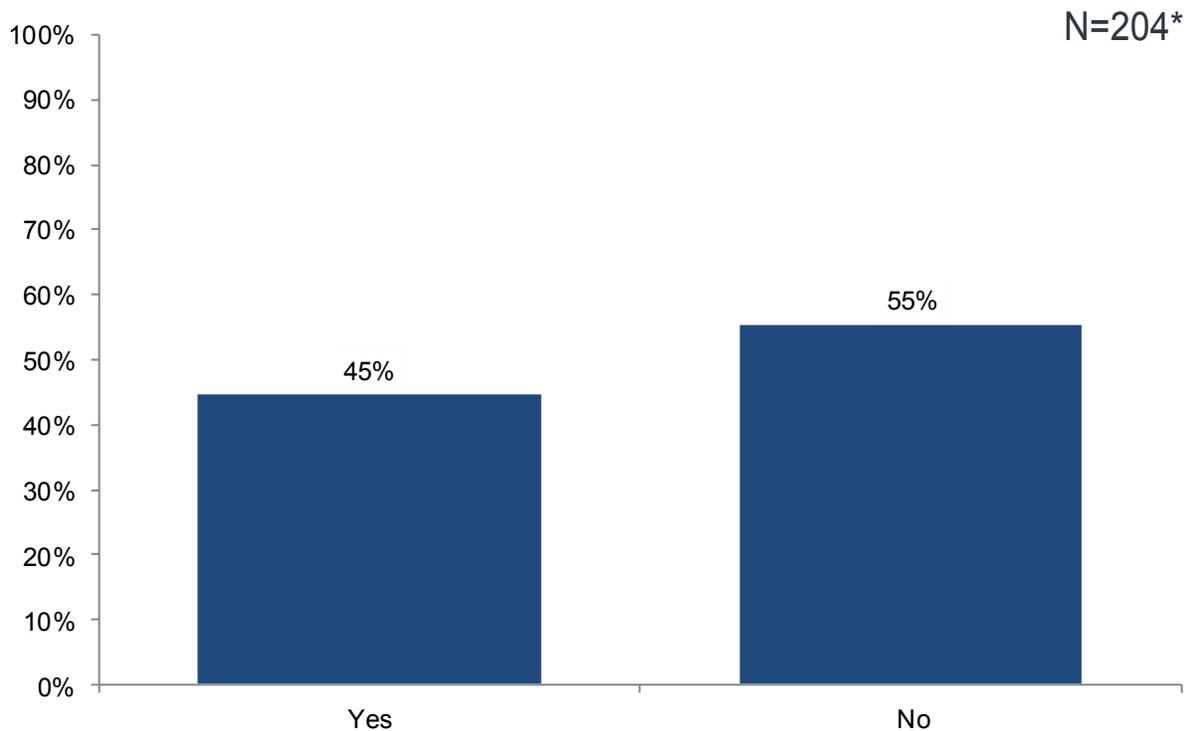
*7 Missing

FIGURE 52: Attempted Suicide With Intent to Die (past 6 months)



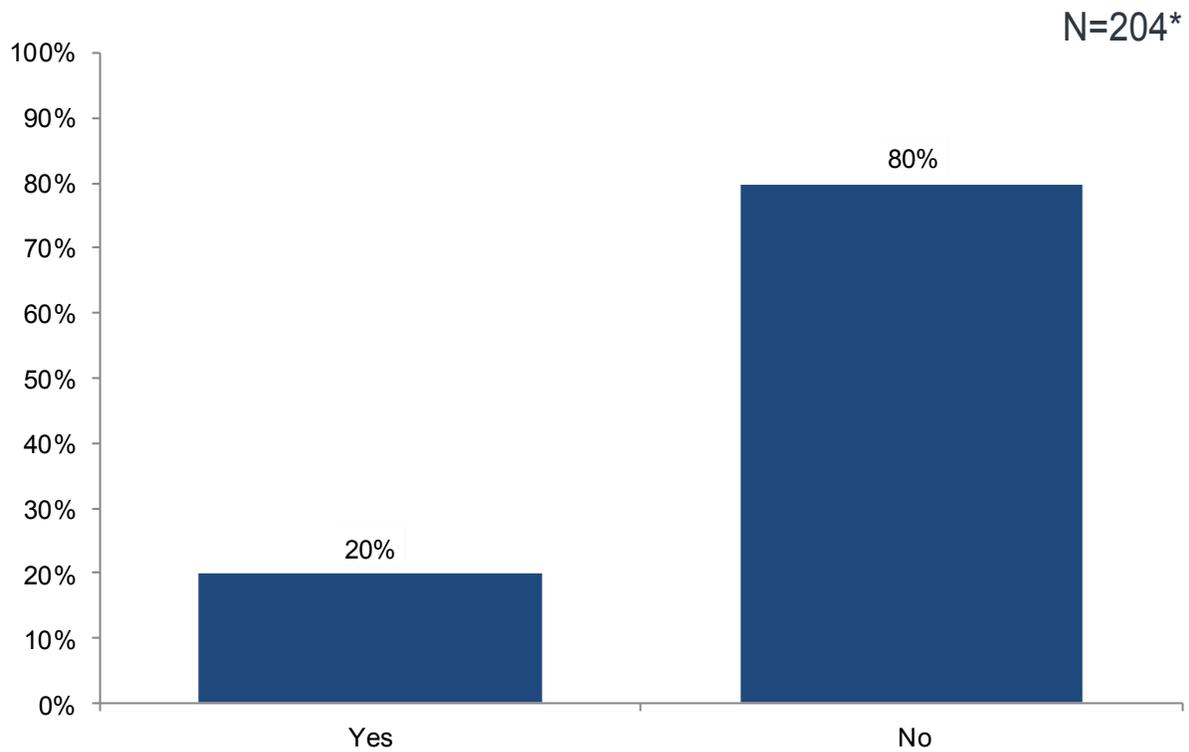
*9 Missing

FIGURE 53: Saw a Psychiatrist, Psychologist or Therapist for an Emotional Health Issue (past 12 months)



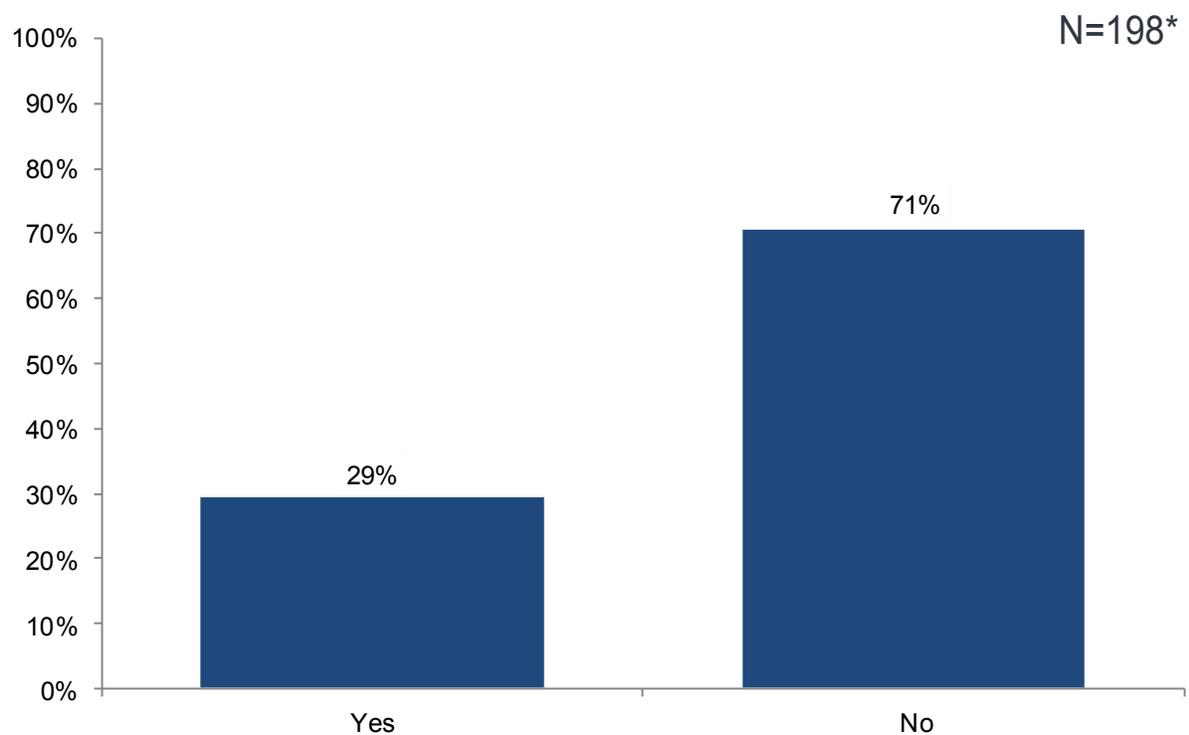
*1 Missing

FIGURE 54: Was Prescribed Medication for an Emotional Health



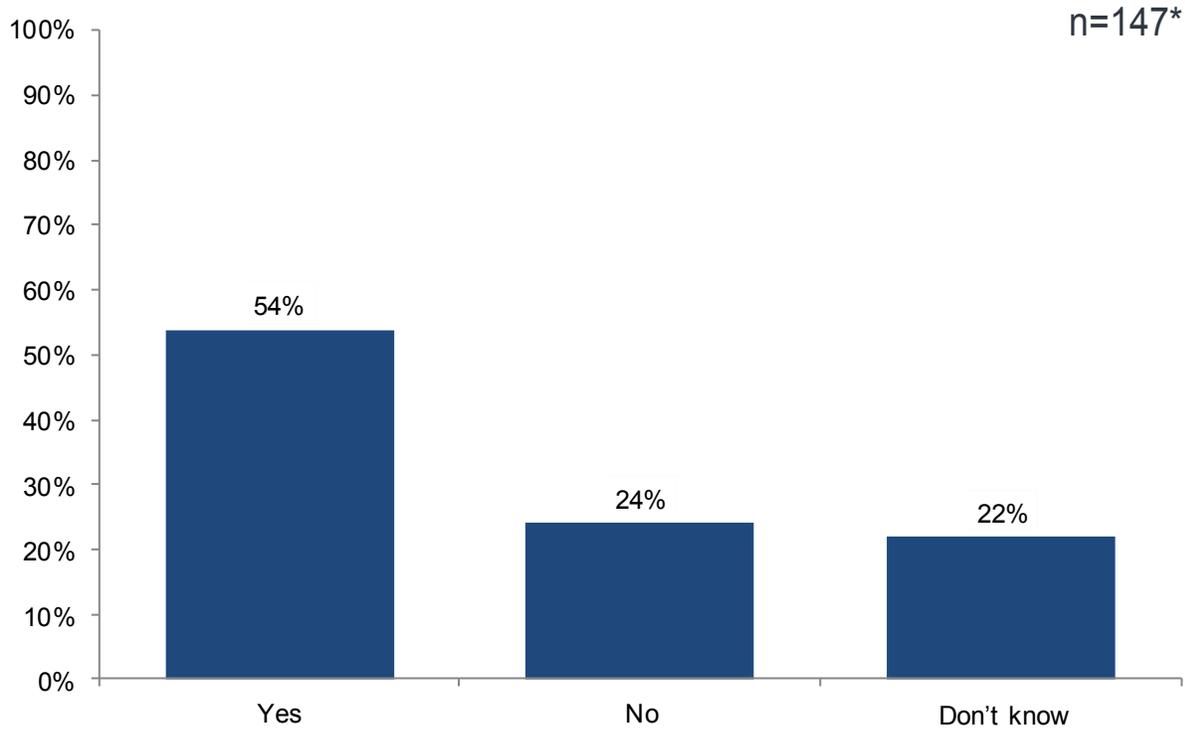
*1 Missing

FIGURE 55: Attend Meetings or Support Groups for Transgender or Gender Non-Conforming People



*7 Missing

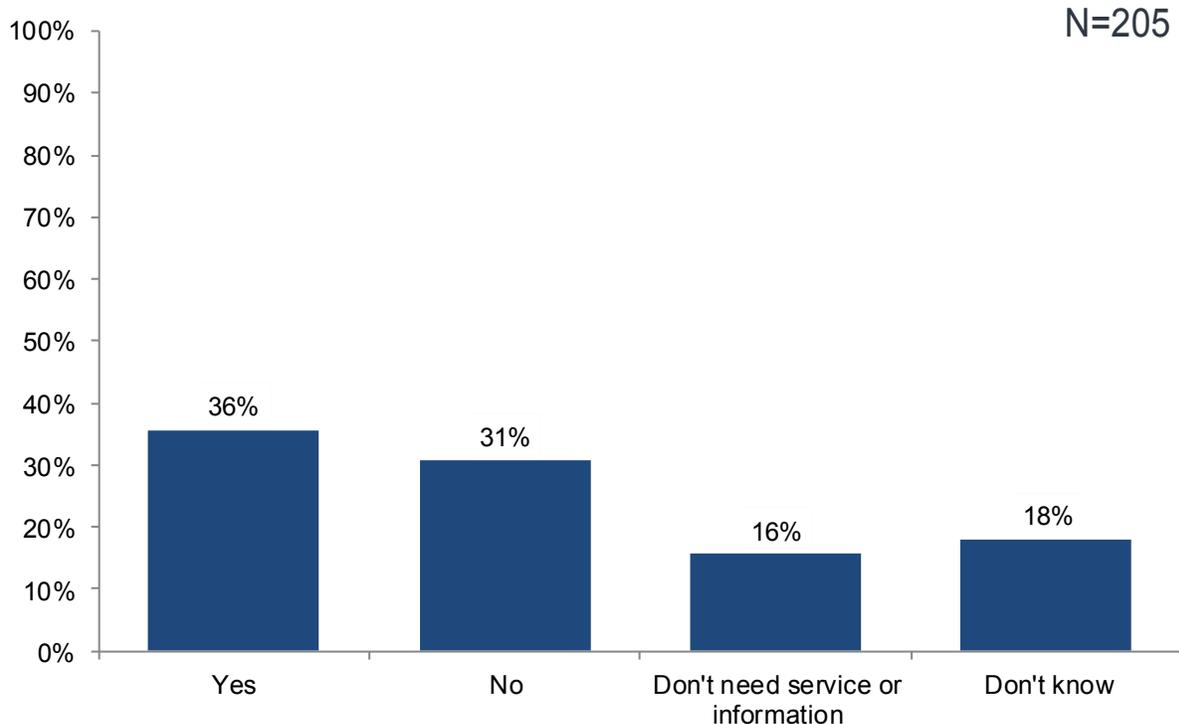
FIGURE 56: Would Like to Attend Meetings or Support Groups for Transgender or Gender Non-Conforming People



*Among those who do not already attend a support group.

*3 Missing

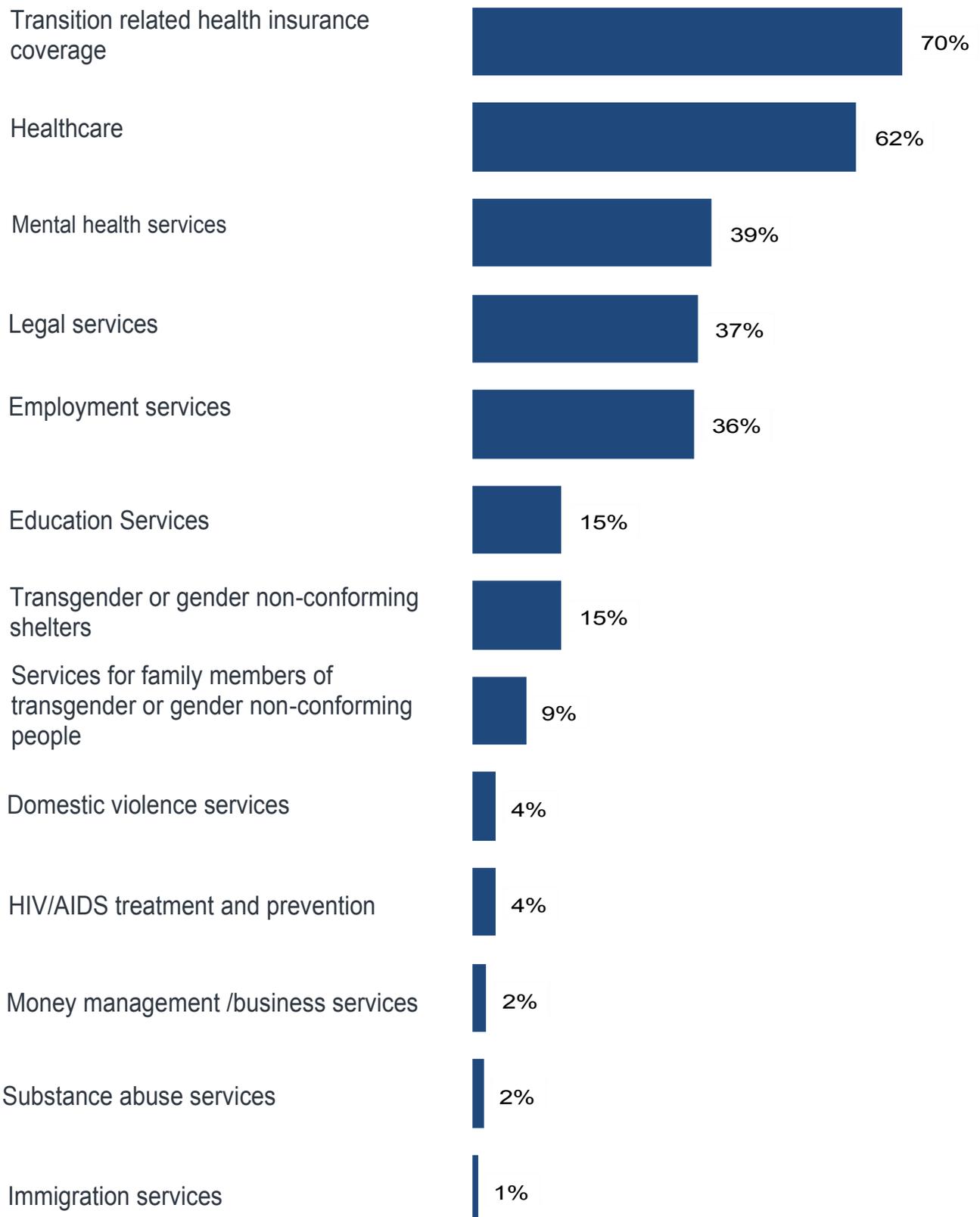
FIGURE 57: Is There a Place to Get Mental Health Information/Services that are Sensitive to the Needs of Transgender People



TOP SERVICE NEEDS

Priority Service Needs for Transgender Community In Nevada (Indicate Top Three)

N=205



CITATIONS

- ¹ Institute of Medicine (IOM). *The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding*. Washington, DC: The National Academic Press, 2011.
- ² Clements-Nolle K., Bachrach A. CBPR with a hidden population: the transgender community health project a decade later, In: *M Minkler and N Wallerstein. eds. Community-based research for health: From Process to Outcomes*. New Jersey; Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2008: Chapter 8, 137-148.
- ³ Zimet GD, Dahlem NW, Zimet, SG, Farley GK. The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. *Journal of Personality Assessment*. 1997, 52: 30-41.
- ⁴ Derogatis LR. Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI 18). Minneapolis, MN: National Computer Systems, Pearson, Inc., 2000.
- ⁵ Nevada Revised Statutes. NRS 610.010.

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